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HALF-HOURS
WITH
FOREIGN NOVELISTS
VOL. II.

HALF-HOURS WITH FOREIGN NOVELISTS.

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HALF-HOURS

WITH

FOREIGN NOVELISTS

*WITH SHORT NOTICES OF THEIR
LIVES AND WRITINGS*

BY
HELEN AND ALICE ZIMMERN



IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. II.

SECOND EDITION

London
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1882

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TURGENIEFF.

BORN IN ORAL, NOV. 8, 1818; NOW LIVING IN BADEN-
BADEN AND PARIS.

TURGENIEFF.

TURGENIEFF, the most interesting of contemporary novelists to whom in some respects may indeed be accorded the first place, is by birth and inspiration a Russian, though he has lived much out of his native land. A member of an old noble family that had long been distinguished in Russian literature, he was bred in an atmosphere of culture far different from that which pervades the houses of too many Russian nobles in the pages of his romances. Educated at home, he spent his youth in the very heart of Russia, and was thus able to become intimately acquainted with the circumstances of the peasantry. He was eye-witness of many scenes immortalised in his pages. When he was sixteen he was sent to study, first at Moscow, and afterwards at St. Petersburg and Berlin. At the latter place he devoted himself to philosophy; and for a whole winter shared an apartment with the Nihilist agitator Bakunin. Returned to Russia, he spent some years on his estate, ranging the country with his gun; for he was an ardent sportsman. After this he travelled on the Continent, and wrote

his *Memoirs of a Sportsman*, in which he depicted some of the scenes of Russian life with which he had become acquainted while traversing the neighbourhood of Oral. The book exposed with relentless force the terrors and abuses of serfdom ; it painted the peasants' mental and physical degradation ; it held up to view the deadly dull country society of Russian nobles and their half-barbarous characters. The work created a deep and lasting sensation ; it opened the eyes of intelligent Russians to one of the worst features of their civilisation ; it was admired and lauded. When Turgenieff returned to St. Petersburg in 1850 he found himself famous, too famous for his peace ; for the book that had given pleasure to the intelligent had given offence at Court. Turgenieff's next production was not allowed to pass the censorship so easily. This official had been purblind, as is the wont of his kind, and had seen nothing further in these stories than truthful representations of reality. His eyes were now officially opened for him. An article on Gogol by Turgenieff was easily proved to contain revolutionary sentiments ; and its author was banished to his estates. Here he continued to hunt and write ; and some of his most gloomy stories of serfdom date from this period, among them *Mumu* and *The Wayside Inn*. According to his own account, he was visited every six weeks by a police-official, who came to look after him, and regularly pre-

sented his authorisation to meddle, asking Turgenieff, at the same time, what he should do. 'Your duty,' replied Turgenieff, returning to him his paper, in which as regularly he wrapped a five-rouble note, whereupon the official departed, and for another six weeks Turgenieff was unmolested. The story points its own moral, and reveals the plague spot of despotism, venality, and corruption. Meanwhile, however, the Czarewitch, the present Emperor of Russia, who had also been struck with Turgenieff's stories, but in a different manner from his father, had been trying to obtain his pardon, and had succeeded shortly before the death of Nicholas, which occurred in 1855. Turgenieff then returned to St. Petersburg ; but he did not stay there long. Probably he found the political atmosphere too stifling. He lived alternately in Italy, France, and Germany, until, in 1863, he settled in a villa at Baden-Baden, to be near his intimate friends, the Garcias. He has never married ; and though he occasionally returns to Russia for a brief visit, he has never again settled in his native land.

Encouraged rather than daunted by the disfavour his first stories incurred in the official world, Turgenieff continued to write in the same strain. He showed how the Russian peasant had many solid good qualities, though their development was hampered by a degrading system of serfage. He

pointed out the readiness of these men to sacrifice themselves for their Fatherland, their Czar, and their Church; their naturally reverent natures, which, though overlaid with the grossest of superstitions, were capable of intelligent emancipation; their mother-wit, their charity, their Oriental resignation to their hard fate. The peasants are clearly Turgenieff's favourites; he is amazed, and rightly, that so many good qualities have been preserved under such inhuman conditions, and he looks to them as the future mainstay of the Russian Empire. On the proprietors he cannot be severe enough; he holds up to scorn their hollow pretensions to culture, their ignorance, their sloth and vice. The worst are those who had been away from home, and become tainted with a sham Western culture. There are still a few left who retain their patriarchal simplicity; but these, on the other hand, are so stupid and retrograde in their views that nothing can be hoped from them either. It is a desperate vista that Turgenieff unfolds in his stories. Healthy normal characters, too, are rare in his pages; it is as though he would show that such cannot flourish in unhealthy and abnormal conditions. For the same cause Russia is rich in originals, and Turgenieff presents these to us with incisive definite strokes. They are often pathological studies, character tragedies revealing the conflict between willing and doing—the one theoretically active,

the other practically indolent. This is strikingly brought out in *Dmitri Rudin* and in *Spring Torrents*. Turgenieff has a wonderful knowledge of the human heart; he can follow it into endless deviations. A realist, he is so in a poetical sense. He never transgresses the boundaries of good taste, even when dealing with the ugly and repulsive; he spiritualises even the commonplace and vulgar. He looks on Russian life with a sympathetic eye, but it is also that of an objective observer, of a cosmopolitan, who can not only discern the taint, but discover its cause. His descriptions are vivid and exact, full of small facts and observations. He takes an impartial view of the complexities of our human life; he draws no conclusions, he does not philosophise; but his tone is sad, at times even morbid. Life is to him a very serious matter; it is evident that he himself is not wholly free from the Byronic world-pain, fashionable in his youth, which is different from the current pessimism, although allied to it. There is a languor, a hopelessness, in his tone which shows he is not devoid of the *blasé* spirit that he attributes to his aristocratic countrymen.

But if Turgenieff has his faults, these are almost wholly eclipsed by his eminent merits; indeed, the reader once under his spell will never stop to regard the spots upon the sun. Turgenieff is an artist of the highest order; his stories, which rarely

exceed the length of novelettes, are masterpieces of conciseness, constructive skill, and narrative. Within the limits of a few pages he conjures up a perfect picture of Russian life, in which the characters live and move. Nor does he only describe men. Nature, animate and inanimate, is also subjected to his keen sharp portraiture; horses, dogs, birds, become entities in his pages; he displays all a naturalist's knowledge of their characters, their idiosyncrasies; he brings both Nature and animals into harmony with men.

Turgenieff's earlier works have been described as having effected for the serfs what *Uncle Tom's Cabin* effected for the slaves. There is, however, an important difference. While the one exposed the moral degradation induced by this custom, the other idealised its heroes and removed them from the realms of possibility. A deep gloom hangs over Turgenieff's stories; his personages are wretched, disappointed, oppressed, or victims of *ennui*, because there is no scope for the development of their energies—aimless lives, full of ineffectual regret.

With the emancipation of the serfs Turgenieff's mission was ended. He then turned to other themes, and exposed the hollow pretensions of cosmopolitan half-culture, the want of thoroughness prevailing in Russian society. He is not out of harmony with the new views; on the contrary, he

is an advanced and liberal thinker, but he desires the real and true, not the specious and false.

Turgenieff's longest works are *A Nest of Nobles*, *Smoke*, *Fathers and Sons*, and *Virgin Soil*, of which the two last are perhaps the finest. *Fathers and Sons*, published in 1861, was written against the doctrines of Nihilism and Materialism, then raging among the younger generation. Few signs of the frantic extravagances of the modern apostles of these doctrines were as yet manifest ; the Nihilism of *Fathers and Sons* is a moderate one, a declamatory destructiveness in words, not actions. Liberal bureaucrats, aristocrats of the old school, emancipated women, and other types of Russian society figure in the book, which excited much dissatisfaction in Russia both among the old and young. It was intended to contrast the two generations, and neither was contented with the result, a sure sign that the delineation was accurate. The book is certainly one full of wide perspectives of thought and reflection. *Smoke*, which followed it, was almost polemical in tone. It satirised the Russians abroad, who talk largely and idly about Slavophiles and Democrats, and boast of the great future that awaits their country without lending a helping hand to bring about this consummation. *Virgin Soil*, published as late as 1877, describes the new social movement in Russia, the result of the changed political circumstances, which has called into being a

new class of over-ardent patriots who desire to raise the condition of the masses. It treats of the revolutionary youth and the new society struggling into existence, and sketches their attempts and failure. Turgenieff is no demagogue; he believes in no violent measures; he exposes as mercilessly the moral rottenness on the one hand, as the Utopian dreams on the other. It is the old moribund Russia that lives in Turgenieff's books, not the new and healthier one which we hope may arise thence; hence his works, as social studies, have a destructive, rather than a constructive tendency. But such as they are, they are great works of art that must long outlive the time that gave them birth. The fortunate fact that they all appear in the French language has brought them within reach of all readers for whom Russian is too commonly an unknown tongue.

The Nihilist.

'Where is your new friend?' he asked Arkadi.

'He has gone out already. He generally gets up very early and makes some excursion. But I must tell you, once for all, that you need not take any notice of him; he does not care for conventionalities.'

'Yes, so I perceive.'

Paul Petrovitch began slowly to spread butter on his bread.

‘Will he remain here any length of time?’

‘That depends. He will go from here to his father’s.’

‘And where does his father live?’

‘In our district; eighty versts from here. He has a little estate there. He used to be the regimental doctor.’

‘Ta-ta, ta-ta! I have been continually asking myself, where could I have heard that name before? Bazarof, Bazarof! Nicholas, do you not remember that in our father’s division there was a Dr. Bazarof?’

‘I seem to remember something of the sort.’

‘Yes, it is right enough. So this doctor is his father—hm!’

Paul Petrovitch twisted his moustache.

‘Well, and what is Mr. Bazarof junior?’ asked he slowly.

‘What is Bazarof?’

Arkadi smiled.

‘Shall I tell you, uncle, what he really is?’

‘Do me that favour, my dear nephew.’

‘He is a Nihilist.’

‘What?’ asked Nicholas Petrovitch.

As for Paul Petrovitch, he suddenly raised the knife, on whose point was a little piece of butter, and remained motionless.

‘He is a Nihilist,’ repeated Arkadi.

‘Nihilist!’ said Nicholas Petrovitch. ‘The

word comes from the Latin *nihil*, nothing, as far as I can tell, and therefore designates a person who acknowledges nothing.'

'Or rather, who respects nothing,' said Paul Petrovitch, who recommenced buttering his bread.

'Or rather, who regards everything from a critical point of view,' remarked Arkadi.

'Does not that come to the same thing?' asked Paul Petrovitch.

'No, by 'no means. A Nihilist is a man who bows to no authority, who accepts no principles on faith alone, however high may be the regard in which this principle is held in human opinion.'

'And do you consider that right?' asked Paul Petrovitch.

'That depends on the point of view, uncle: some think it right, while others consider it quite wrong.'

'Indeed. Well, I see it is not *our* point of view. We of the old school are of opinion that without principles, that are received on faith alone, as you express it, the world could not exist. But *vous avez changé tout cela*. Well, may God give you good health and the rank of general;* as for us, we will be content with admiring you, you—what do you call yourselves?'

'Nihilists,' said Arkadi, accentuating each syllable.

* Russian proverb.

‘Yes. We used to have Hegelists, now we have Nihilists. We shall see how you manage to exist in the nothing, the vacuum, as under an air-pump. And now, brother Nicholas, be so good as to ring ; I should like to drink my cocoa.’

The combat took place the same evening at tea. Paul had come down into the drawing-room in a state of irritation, and ready for the fight. He only awaited an opportunity to throw himself on the enemy ; but he had long to wait. Bazarof never spoke much before the ‘two old fellows,’ as he called the two brothers ; besides, he did not feel very well this evening, and swallowed one cup of tea after another in silence. Paul was devoured by impatience : at length he found the opportunity he had been seeking.

The conversation turned on one of the neighbouring landholders.

‘He is a simpleton, a bad aristocrat,’ said Bazarof, who had known him at St. Petersburg.

‘Permit me to ask you,’ said Paul, with trembling lips, ‘whether the words “simpleton” and “aristocrat” are in your opinion synonymous?’

‘I said “bad aristocrat,”’ replied Bazarof carelessly, sipping his tea.

‘That is true ; but I assume that you rank aristocrats and bad aristocrats in the same category. I think it right to inform you that such is not my opinion. I venture to say that I am gene-

rally considered a liberal man and lover of progress ; but it is just on that account that I respect the aristocrats, the true aristocrats. Consider, my dear sir'—Bazarof fixed his eyes on Paul—'my dear sir,' continued he, with dignity, 'consider the English nobility : they do not give up one iota of their rights, and yet they respect the rights of others just as much ; they demand what is due to them, and yet they are always careful to render their due to others. It is the nobility that has given England its liberty, and that is its strongest support.'

'That is an old song we have often heard,' replied Bazarof ; 'but what do you mean by it?'

'I mean to prove by it, my dear sir, that without the consciousness of one's own dignity, without self-respect—and all these sentiments prevail among the aristocracy—there can be no solid foundation for the *bien public*, for the edifice of the State. The individual, the personality, my dear sir—that is the essential ; a man's personality must stand firm as a rock, for everything rests on this basis. I know quite well that you think my manners, my dress, even my habit of cleanliness, absurd ; but all this springs from self-respect, from a feeling of duty—yes, yes, sir, from a feeling of duty. I live in an out-of-the-way corner of the province ; but I do not neglect my person on that account—in my own person I respect the man.'

‘Excuse me, Paul Petrovitch,’ replied Bazarof; ‘you say that you respect yourself, and you sit there with your arms crossed. What advantage can that be to the *bien public*? If you did not respect yourself you would not act differently.’

Paul Petrovitch turned pale.

‘That is quite another matter,’ replied he. ‘I have no intention of telling you why I stay with my arms crossed, as you are pleased to call it. I merely wished to tell you that aristocracy depends upon principle; and it is only immoral or worthless men who can live nowadays without principles. I said so to Arkadi the day after his arrival; and I am merely repeating it to you to-day. Is it not the case, Nicholas Petrovitch?’

Nicholas Petrovitch nodded assent.

‘Aristocracy, liberalism, principles, progress,’ repeated Bazarof—‘all words quite foreign to our language, and perfectly useless. A true Russian need not use them.’

‘What does he need, then, in your opinion? According to you, we are outside the limits of humanity, outside its laws. That is going rather too far; the logic of history requires—’

‘What do you need that logic for? We can do very well without it.’

‘How?’

‘I will give you an example. I fancy that you do not need the aid of logic in carrying a piece of

bread to your mouth when you are hungry. What is the use of all these abstractions?’

Paul lifted up his hands.

‘I no longer understand you,’ said he. ‘You insult the Russian people. I do not understand how it is possible not to acknowledge principles—rules! What have you, then, to guide you through life?’

‘I have told you before, uncle,’ interposed Arkadi, ‘that we do not acknowledge any authorities.’

‘We act according as anything seems useful to us,’ added Bazarof: ‘to-day it seems to us useful to deny, and we do deny.’

‘Everything?’

‘Absolutely everything.’

‘What? Not only art, poetry, but even—I hesitate to say it.’

‘Everything,’ repeated Bazarof, with indomitable calm.

Paul looked at him fixedly. He had not expected this answer. Arkadi blushed with pleasure.

‘Excuse me,’ said Nicholas, ‘you deny everything, or, to speak more correctly, you destroy everything; but you must also rebuild.’

‘That does not concern us. First of all, we must clear the ground.’

‘The present state of the people requires it,’

added Arkadi seriously. 'We must fulfil this duty ; we have no right to abandon ourselves to the satisfaction of our personal vanity.'

This last speech did not please Bazarof. It smacked of philosophy, that is, of romanticism ; for he gave this name even to philosophy. But he did not think this a fitting moment to contradict his young pupil.

'No, no !' exclaimed Paul, with sudden emotion. 'I will not believe that you gentlemen have a right idea of the Russian people, and that you express its real wants, its surest wishes. No, the Russian people is not what you represent it. It has a reverent respect for tradition ; it is patriarchal ; it cannot live without faith.'

'I shall not attempt to contradict you,' replied Bazarof. 'I am even ready to admit that this once you are right.'

'But if I am right ?'

'That proves nothing whatever.'

'Nothing whatever,' repeated Arkadi, with the assurance of an experienced chess-player, who, having foreseen a move that his opponent considers dangerous, does not seem in the least disconcerted by it.

'How can you say that proves nothing ?' said Paul, stupefied. 'Do you then separate yourself from your people ?'

'And what if I did ? The people believe that

when it thunders, the prophet Elijah is riding over the heavens in his chariot. Well, must I share its opinion in this matter? You think you will confound me by telling me that the people is Russian. Well, am not I Russian too?

‘No; after all that you have just said, you are not. I will no longer acknowledge you to be Russian.’

‘My grandfather followed the plough,’ replied Bazarof, with lofty pride. ‘Ask any one of your peasants which of us two—you or me—he is readiest to acknowledge as his fellow-citizen. You cannot even talk to him.’

‘And you, who can talk to him, you despise him.’

‘Why not, if he deserves it? You condemn the tendency of my ideas; but how do you know that it is accidental, that it is not rather determined by the universal spirit of the people whom you defend so well?’

‘Come, the Nihilists are very useful.’

‘Whether they are or not is not for us to decide. Do not you also think that you are good for something?’

‘Gentlemen, gentlemen, no personalities,’ exclaimed Nicholas, rising.

Paul smiled, and placing his hand on his brother’s shoulder, forced him to sit down again.

‘Set your mind at rest,’ said he; ‘I shall not

forget myself, if only because of that feeling of dignity of which this gentleman speaks so scornfully. Excuse me,' continued he, once more addressing Bazarof; 'you probably think that your mode of looking at things is a new one; that is a mistake on your part. The materialism you profess has been held in honour more than once, and has always proved itself insufficient.'

'Another foreign word!' replied Bazarof. He was beginning to become bitter, and the complexion of his face was assuming an unpleasant yellow. 'In the first place, let me tell you that we do not preach; that is not one of our habits.'

'What do you do, then?'

'I will tell you. We have begun by calling attention to the extortionate officials, the need of roads, the absence of trade, the manner of executing justice.'

'Yes, yes; you are informers, *divulgators*,* that is the name given to you, if I am not much mistaken. I agree with you in many of your criticisms; but—'

'Then we soon discovered that it was not enough to talk about the wounds to which we are succumbing, that all this only tended to platitudes and dogmatism. We perceived that our advanced

* This expression was used to designate the literary movement in the early years of Alexander II.'s reign, which is alluded to in this passage.

men, our *divulgators*, were worth nothing whatever ; that we were taking up our time with follies, such as art for art's sake, creative power which does not know itself, the parliamentary system, the need of lawyers, and a thousand other foolish tales ; while we ought to have been thinking of our daily bread ; while we were overwhelmed by the grossest superstition ; while all our joint-stock companies were becoming bankrupt. All this is only because there is a dearth of honest men ; while even the liberation of the serfs, with which Government is much occupied, will produce no good effects, because our peasants are themselves ready to steal, so that they may go and drink poisonous drugs in the taverns.'

'Good,' replied Paul, 'very good. You have discovered all that, and all the same you are determined to undertake nothing serious?'

'Yes, we are determined!' repeated Bazarof, somewhat sharply.

Suddenly he began to reproach himself for having said so much before this gentleman.

'And you confine yourselves to abuse?'

'We abuse if necessary.'

'And that is what is called Nihilism?'

'That is what is called Nihilism!' repeated Bazarof, this time in a particularly irritating tone.

Paul winced a little.

'Good!' said he, with forced calm and constrained manner. 'The mission of Nihilism is to

remedy all things, and you are our saviours and our heroes. Excellent! But why do you abuse the others so much, and call them chatterboxes? Do you not chatter as much as the rest?’

‘Come, if there is anything we have to reproach ourselves with, it is certainly not this,’ muttered Bazarof between his teeth.

‘What! can you say that you act, or even prepare for action?’

Bazarof remained silent. Paul trembled, but he restrained his anger.

‘Then act, destroy,’ continued he; ‘but how dare you destroy without ever knowing why you destroy?’

‘We destroy because we are a force,’ said Arkadi gravely.

Paul looked at his nephew, and smiled.

‘Yes, force is responsible to no one,’ continued Arkadi, drawing himself up.

‘Wretched man,’ exclaimed Paul Petrovitch, no longer able to contain himself, ‘if you would but consider what you assert of Russia alone, with your absurd phrases! No, it would require an angel’s patience to endure that force! The Mongol and the savage Kalmuk have force too. But how can this force help us? What ought to be dear to us is civilisation; yes, yes, my dear sirs, the fruits of civilisation. And do not tell me that these fruits are worthless; the merest dauber of signboards,

the most wretched fiddler, who, for five kopecks an evening, plays polkas and mazurkas, are more useful than you, because they are representatives of civilisation, and not of the Mongolian brute force ! You consider yourselves advanced, and your proper place would be in a Kalmuk kibitka. Force ! Consider one moment, you strong gentlemen, that at most there are only a few dozen of you, while the others may be counted by millions, and that they will not allow you to tread under foot their most sacred traditions ; no, they will tear you to pieces.'

'If they tear us to pieces, we must put up with it,' replied Bazarof. 'But you are quite out in your reckoning. We are not so few as you suppose.'

'What ! You seriously believe that you will be able to bring the whole people into your ranks ?'

'Do you not know that a kopeck candle is enough to set the whole city of Moscow on fire ?' answered Bazarof.

'Excellent ! First, almost Satanic pride, and then irony, which reveals your bad taste. This is how youth is carried away ; this is how the inexperienced hearts of these boys are seduced. Look ! there is one of them by your side ; he almost worships you.' Arkadi turned away, frowning. 'And this contagion has already spread. I have been told that at Rome our painters no longer set foot into the Vatican ; they call Raphael a bungler, because, as they say, he is considered an authority

—and those who say this are themselves incapacity personified ; their imagination cannot soar beyond the “ Girl at the Well ;”^{*} however they may try, they cannot attain anything better ! And how ugly is this “ Girl at the Well” ! I suppose you have the highest opinion of these fellows, have you not ?

‘ As far as I am concerned,’ replied Bazarof, ‘ I would not give twopence for Raphael, and I do not suppose that the others are worth much more.’

‘ Bravo, bravo ! Do you hear, Arkadi ? That is how young people should express themselves now ! O, I can quite understand why they follow in your footsteps ! Formerly they used to feel the need of learning something. As they did not wish to be considered ignorant, they were forced to work. But now they need only say, “ There is nothing but folly and rubbish in the world ;” and there is an end to everything. The students may well rejoice. Formerly they were only foolish boys—behold them suddenly transformed into Nihilists !’

‘ It appears to me that you are forgetting the sentiment of personal dignity, on which you laid so much stress just now,’ remarked Bazarof phlegmatically, while Arkadi’s face flushed with indignation, and his eyes flashed. ‘ Our dispute has led us too far. I think we should do well to stop here.

* Most of the young Russian painters who go to Rome at the expense of Government choose this subject for their first picture.

Yet,' added he, rising, 'I should agree with you if you could name to me a single institution of our social, civil, or family life, which does not deserve to be swept away without mercy.'

'I could name a million such,' exclaimed Paul Petrovitch, 'a million ! Take, for instance, the commune.'*

A cold smile passed over Bazarof's lips.

'As for the commune,' said he, 'you had better talk to your brother about that. I suppose he must know by this time what to think of the commune, the solidarity of the peasants, their temperance, and similar jokes.'

'And the family, the family, such as we still find it among our peasants!' exclaimed Paul Petrovitch.

'In my opinion that is another question that you would do well not to examine too closely. Come, take my advice, Paul Petrovitch, and take two days to consider the matter. Nothing else will occur to you just at present; consider all our institutions one after another, and contemplate them carefully. Meantime Arkadi and I will—'

'Turn everything to ridicule,' interrupted Paul Petrovitch.

'No ; dissect frogs. Come, Arkadi. Good afternoon, gentlemen.'

* It is well known that the Russian Commune is still based on the indivisibility of property.

The two friends went out. The brothers remained alone together, and for some time could only look at each other in silence.

‘So that is the youth of to-day,’ began Paul Petrovitch at length ; ‘so those are our successors !’

The next scene is laid at Bazarof’s home, to which he has returned after a lengthened absence, taking his friend Arkadi with him.

The Nihilist.

It was midday. The heat was suffocating, in spite of the fine veil of whitish clouds that hid the sun. All Nature was silent ; only the cocks were crowing in the village, and the sound caused in all those who heard it a curious sensation of laziness and weariness. From time to time there sounded from the summit of a tree the piercing cry of a young hawk, like a plaintive call for help. Arkadi and Bazarof were lying in the shade of a little hay-rick on some armfuls of grass, which, although still green and fresh, rustled with every movement.

‘That aspen-tree reminds me of my childhood,’ began Bazarof ; ‘it stands on the edge of a pit that has been dug where formerly was a brick-kiln. I used to think that this tree and that hollow had the effect of a talisman ; I never felt dull near them. At that time I did not understand that I did not feel dull, because I was a child. Now

that I am grown up the talisman has lost its power.'

'How many years have you spent here altogether?' asked Arkadi.

'Only two years together; but we used to come here from time to time. We lived a nomadic life; we were always travelling from one town to another.'

'Is this house old?'

'Yes; my grandfather built it—my mother's father.'

'And this grandfather, what was he?'

'How the deuce should I know! I fancy some sort of major. He had served under Souvarof, and was perpetually telling how they had crossed the Alps. I daresay he boasted a good deal.'

'Then that is why you have Souvarof's likeness in your sitting-room. I must tell you I am very fond of these little old houses like yours; there is something so warm and comfortable about them, and they always have a quite peculiar smell.'

'Yes, of lamp-oil and soap-suds,' replied Bazarof. 'And, O, what swarms of flies in these charming little houses! P-ah!'

'I suppose,' continued Arkadi, after a moment's silence, 'that your parents did not treat you strictly in your childhood?'

'You know my parents—they are not ogres.'

'You love them very dearly, Eugene?'

‘O yes, Arkadi.’

‘They are so much attached to you!’

Bazarof did not answer.

‘Do you know of what I am thinking?’ said he at length, placing his arms under his head.

‘No ; of what?’

‘I am thinking how sweet life must be for my parents. My father takes an interest in everything, although he is sixty. He speaks of palliatives, attends the sick, is generous to the peasants, in short he enjoys his life. My mother cannot complain either, her day is so completely filled with all sorts of occupations, with “O’s!” and “Ah’s!” that she has no time for thinking ; and I—’

‘And you?’

‘I am thinking : here I am, lying next this hayrick. The place I occupy is so infinitely small compared with the rest of space where I am not, and where I am not wanted ; and the short time that is given me to live is so small compared with the eternity in which I did not exist, and shall not exist. And yet in this atom, this mathematical point, the blood circulates, the brain works, and also desires something. What nonsense ! what folly !’

‘Allow me to make one remark. What you say applies equally to all men.’

‘That is true,’ replied Bazarof. ‘I only meant to say that these good folks—I mean my parents

—do not trouble themselves about their nonentity ; it does not annoy or disquiet them ; but as for me, I can feel nothing but *ennui* and hatred.'

'Hatred ! why hatred ?'

'Why, what a question ! Have you forgotten ?'

'I remember everything ; but I do not think that gives you a right to hate. You are unhappy, I admit ; but—'

'Ah, yes, Arkadi Nikolaïtch, I see that you understand love like all the young people of the present day. You say, "Chick, chick, chick!" to the hen, and as soon as the hen approaches you, you run away. That is not my way. But let us leave this subject. When anything cannot be remedied, it is folly to think any more about it.'

He turned on his side, and continued,

'Ah, there is an ant that is cheerfully dragging along a half-dead fly. Drag on, my dear, drag on ! Do not trouble yourself about its sufferings ; you may, in your character of animal, despise every feeling of pity. You are not like us men, who crush and break one another of our own free will.'

'You ought not to speak like that, Eugene. When were you crushed, as you call it ?'

Bazarof lifted his head.

'I believe I have a right to be proud of it. I have not destroyed myself ; and no woman shall ever be able to do it. Amen ! That is done with !

You will never hear another word from me on this subject.'

The two friends lay still for some time without speaking.

'Yes,' continued Bazarof, 'man is a strange creature. If you cast a glance from the side or from a distance at the obscure existence that the "fathers" had here, everything about it looks perfect. Eat, drink, and know that you are acting in the most sensible and proper manner possible. But no, *ennui* soon seizes you. You feel a desire to mix with other men, if only to quarrel with them ; but, at any rate, mix with them you must.'

'Life ought to be so arranged that each moment has its meaning,' said Arkadi pensively.

'Of course. It is always pleasant to signify something, even if it be something false. It might even be possible to put up with insignificant things ; but the littleness of life, there is the real evil.'

'There is no littleness for him who will not recognise it.'

'Hm ! you have just said a reversed commonplace.'

'Why? What do you mean by that?'

'Listen. If I say, for instance, "civilisation is useful," that is to speak a commonplace ; but if I say, "civilisation is pernicious," that is a reversed commonplace. It sounds rather finer, but in reality is exactly the same thing.'

‘But truth, where must that be sought?’

‘Where? I answer you like echo: where?’

‘You are in a melancholy humour, Eugene.’

‘Indeed! Then the sun must have got into my head; and I think we have eaten too many raspberries.’

‘Then it would be a good thing to take a nap,’ said Arkadi.

‘Very well. Only do not look at me. People always look stupid when they are asleep.’

‘Then you are not indifferent as to what people think of you?’

‘I hardly know how to answer you. A man really worthy of the name ought not to care what is said about him. The true man is he of whom people think nothing, but who makes himself obeyed or even detested.’

‘That is strange. I detest no one,’ said Arkadi, after a moment’s reflection.

‘I detest a great many. You are a gentle soul, regular plum-jam! How could you detest! You are timid. You lack self-confidence.’

‘And you,’ replied Arkadi, ‘you have a great deal of self-confidence; you think very highly of yourself.’

Bazarof was silent for some moments.

‘As soon as I meet a man who does not lower his head before me,’ said he slowly, ‘I shall change my opinion about myself. Detest? You were

saying this morning, for instance, when we were passing the beautiful white house belonging to your Starosta, Philip: "Russia will not have reached perfection until the last of its peasants has a similar dwelling, and all of us ought to help to bring this about." Well, I immediately began to detest that peasant, be he Philip or John, for whose well-being I was to labour, and who would never show me the least gratitude for it. And yet what use would his gratitude be to me? When he lives in his fine cottage I shall help the nettles to flourish. Well, and then?

'Be silent, Eugene. When I hear you speak like that I am almost tempted to agree with those who say we have no principles.'

'You speak like your worthy uncle. There are no principles. Have you not discovered that before? There are only sensations. Everything depends on sensations.'

'How is that?'

'Well, take me as an example. If I have a negative contradictory spirit, that depends on my sensations. To deny is agreeable to me; my brain is constituted accordingly, and that is all. Why does chemistry please me? Why do you like apples? All this is the result of sensations. Here lies the truth, and men will never penetrate deeper. We do not willingly confess this, and I shall never repeat it to you.'

‘But then, virtue itself would only be a sensation?’

‘Doubtless.’

‘Eugene!’ exclaimed Arkadi sadly.

‘Ah, the morsel is not to your liking! No, my dear; if you are resolved to cut away everything you must not even spare your own limbs. But we have had enough philosophising. “Nature inspires us with the silence of sleep,” says Pushkin.’

‘He never said anything of the sort,’ replied Arkadi.

‘If he did not, he might and ought to have said it in his character of poet. By the bye, he was a soldier, was he not?’

‘No, Pushkin never was a soldier.’

‘What? Why, there is not a page of his on which he does not cry, “To arms, to arms, for the honour of Russia!”’

‘Where do you get all these inventions from? I call that calumny.’

‘Calumny? What a crime! Do you expect to frighten me by that word? Whatever calumnies one may spread about any individual, he really deserves twenty times as much.’

‘Let us rather try to sleep,’ said Arkadi, with vexation.

‘With the greatest pleasure,’ replied Bazarof.

But neither of them could sleep. A feeling that resembled enmity had glided into their hearts.

After a few minutes, they opened their eyes, and looked at each other in silence.

‘Look!’ said Arkadi suddenly, ‘at this withered leaf which has just dropped from a plane-tree, and is falling to the ground ; it flutters in the air just like a butterfly. Is it not strange ? What is saddest and most deathlike resembles what is gayest and most lifelike.’

‘O my dear Arkadi Nicolaïtch,’ exclaimed Bazarof, ‘I beg of you, do not talk poetry.’

‘I speak as I feel ; but, indeed, that is despotism. A thought occurs to me, why should I not give it expression ?’

‘That is quite fair ; but why should not I also say what I think ? I consider it indecent to talk poetry.’

‘It is probably more decent, according to you, to use abusive language !’

‘Ah, I see that you are quite determined to tread in your uncle’s footsteps. How delighted that idiot would be if he could hear you !’

‘What did you call Paul Petrovitch ?’

‘What he deserves to be called—an idiot !’

‘That is intolerable !’ exclaimed Arkadi.

‘Ah, the sentiment of family is roused,’ said Bazarof calmly. ‘I have noticed that it has taken very deep root in all men. They are capable of renouncing everything, of abandoning all their prejudices ; but to acknowledge, for instance, that

a brother who has stolen pocket-handkerchiefs is a thief, that is beyond their powers. In truth, a person who is so near to me as *my* brother, could he be anything but a genius?’

‘I have only obeyed a feeling of justice, and not of family,’ replied Arkadi warmly. ‘But as you do not understand this feeling, as this “sensation” is lacking to you, you ought not to speak of it.’

‘Which is as much as to say that Arkadi Kirsanof is so much superior to me that I am incapable of understanding him. I submit, and condemn myself to silence.’

‘Do stop, Eugene, I beg of you ; we shall end by quarrelling.’

‘Ah, I beg of you, Arkadi, let us quarrel ; let us fight till it ends in mutual annihilation.’

‘It might indeed end in—’

‘In blows?’ replied Bazarof. ‘Why not? Here, on the hay, with all these idyllic surroundings, far from the world and from the looks of the curious, nothing could be better. But you have not strength enough to fight me. I should seize you by the throat—’

Bazarof extended his bony fingers. Arkadi turned round laughing and made a gesture of defence ; but the sight of his friend was so alarming, the smile that played round his lips, and the dark fire that glowed in his eyes were so threatening, that an involuntary feeling of fear overcame him.

FREYTAG.

BORN IN KREUZBURG, JULY 13, 1816 ; NOW LIVING
IN GOTHA.

FREYTAG.

FREYTAG is, in some respects, the most interesting contemporary German author. He marks an epoch in the literary history of his country, and on that account alone his works will survive. It was he who first powerfully inclined towards realism, and revolted against the vapid sentimentalism into which *Werther*, and imitations of this romance, had plunged the imaginative literature of Germany. An attempt in this direction had been made by the peasant stories of the Switzer Gotthelf, and his German follower B. Auerbach ; but the peasants of the latter were not free from an occasional leaning towards sophistical and philosophical introspection and sentiment too refined for their station. Freytag made it his aim to cast aside the idealism and subjectivity that had hitherto reigned in German novels, and to lead their writers to seek their materials in actual life. The gulf that divides the cultured classes of German society from their less intellectual brethren is greater in that country than in any other, the need of fusion more urgent. The learned and professional classes brand those who stand out-

side with the name of Philistine ; a word that, thanks to Matthew Arnold, has become engrafted upon our language also, though with a slightly different meaning. The result of such a wholesale condemnation was naturally an indifference to the class thus stigmatised, and total ignorance concerning it. Freytag made it his mission to enlighten this ignorance, to point out to this indifference that it was not only wrong and destructive to the well-being of the nation, but even unfounded. In the two great romances that will carry his name down to posterity, he showed on the one hand that Philistinism had a poetry and a romance of its own no less excellent and admirable than that of those classes who regard poetry as their exclusive property ; and on the other, how these need not flatter themselves that Philistia could not penetrate into their charmed circle. In *Die Verlorene Handschrift*, as a counterpart to *Soll und Haben*, he depicted the Philistinism that is abroad in literature, that nestles in professional circles, and makes intellectual pursuits as much a matter of barter, of pecuniary interests, of petty unworthy schemes, as those which absorb the time and thoughts of the commercial classes. In short, Freytag constituted himself the champion of the middle class—the bourgeois poet, who places the good qualities of these persons in their best light, and shows that they have virtues hitherto unappreciated. If he exaggerates this

tendency at times, it yet must not be deprecated. In Germany, with its sharp division of class, works such as these are likely to be of incalculable benefit, if only on this account, not to mention that they are enacted upon the solid ground of reality. If German novels have become less unreal, less intangible of late years, this may be largely ascribed to the influence of Freytag, himself, of course, also influenced by the age, which is less prone to hover in the realms of moonshine and ideality.

This powerful writer, whose health has of late years been failing seriously, was born in Silesia. He received a careful education, both at home and at school. At Breslau and Berlin he studied German philology, and laid the foundation of that accurate knowledge of the social conditions and the language of various periods, of which he afterwards availed himself in his patriotic cycle of novels *Die Ahnen*. At the age of thirty-three he settled at Breslau as *privat docent*, employing his leisure hours in writing. His first published work was a series of short narrative poems, written in popular language. This was followed by two plays, *Die Valentine* and *Graf Waldemar*, that met with a favourable reception on the stage. In 1848 he removed to Leipzig, to assist the eminent literary historian Julian Schmidt in editing the *Grenzboten*, a periodical whose purpose was to elevate the general tone and interests of the middle class. Freytag wrote

for its pages a number of excellent articles on the German past. This occupation, and the upheaval of 1848, which destroyed so many romantic dreams, set Freytag thinking. Up to this time his writings had been free from any pronounced tendency; they had been in the conventional tone, inclining on the whole more to romanticism than reality. But the desperate and abortive attempts of Germany to free herself from despotism left its mark upon all thinkers of the period. On Freytag it had the effect of driving him into an opposite extreme; he threw overboard all idealism, all romanticism; he desired to grasp reality, to touch even the commonplace because of its sanity; he wished at all costs to depict only the possible, the actual. But he did not hurry into production, but worked on steadily at journalism. In 1854 he produced a comedy to which has rightly been assigned the rank of the best modern German play. *Die Journalisten* ('The Journalists') is a drama with a tendency; its purpose is to hold up to opprobrium the corruption of the modern German press, and the men who produce it. A powerful play, full of able delineations of characters, of humour, and excellent situations, it maintains its position upon the German stage to this day. Close upon this success followed the novel *Soll und Haben* ('Debit and Credit'), the prose poem of commercial life, the apotheosis of Philistinism. Sharply

attacked and criticised by the faction at whom it had flung a defiant gauntlet, the book was eagerly read by all classes, and met with an enthusiastic reception. In its pages Freytag has delineated the real life of a burgher family, whose interests centre and revolve around their unromantic occupations. The story tells the career of Anton Wohlfahrt, who, by dint of energy, integrity, and tenacity of purpose, rises to the position of a partner in the firm of T. O. Schröter. He is a model of bourgeois heroism and civic virtues. Around him cluster a number of personages, so many, indeed, that it is not easy to determine who is the real hero of the story. For Freytag is wanting in form, his composition is not good, his novels lack coherence, and have a tendency to digress into episodes. The substratum is too large and broad, the structure is reared too diffusely, the whole is overweighted by trivial incidents, tiresome conversations, and redundant characters. It is these faults of artistic reticence, self-control, and concentration that hinder Freytag from being a really great novelist ; faults that pervade his nation, and which are so conspicuously absent from the pages of the French. The latter seem to have an instinctive sense of artistic form, of which the Germans seem as wholly destitute. On this account it is much easier to make extracts from the Germans than the French : the latter do not bear mutilation, they are a rounded

whole ; the others, from their episodic character, lend themselves to this purpose, and are often more excellent in portions than in their entirety. This leads to that unfortunate inclination to length and diffuseness which makes German novels, notwithstanding their many and indisputable excellences, such unpalatable reading to the English. Both *Soll und Haben* and *Die Verlorene Handschrift*, had they been more closely knit, might have been works of the first order of merit. But in a work of art, no excellences whatever can atone for the want of art.

In *Soll und Haben* another feature of Freytag's mind came into prominence, and this is his democratic tendency, his hatred of the aristocracy. The former tendencies he has mitigated in his latest work in conformity with the spirit that now reigns in his country ; his recent object has been to inspire his nation with a healthy patriotism. In *Soll und Haben* he endeavoured to show the rottenness of the German nobility, who, idle and eaten up with family pride, possessing only the prestige of their rank, cannot compete with the financial and industrial classes, and must inevitably sink in the social struggle. He pointed out forcibly the unfortunate position of the German noble, who, owing to the prevalent system of government, is excluded from any hereditary political importance, and whom the narrow mediæval class-prejudices and pride con-

demn to a useless and aimless existence. In *Soll und Haben* we see the decadence of an old noble family painted with relentless truth. Such in brief is this novel, which contains no romantic incidents, no heroic flights, which merely delineates the *terre à terre* existence, the prosaic atmosphere of a commercial establishment.

In *Die Verlorene Handschrift* Freytag shifted his ground, and laid the scene of his romance in the head-quarters of the professional classes, the anti-Philistines. Its hero is Felix Werner, a professor of philology, whose one idea in life is to discover the lost books of Tacitus, in the survival of which he firmly believes. He deems that he is upon their track, and scours the country in his search. In so doing he meets with his future wife, and her adventures in the town among her husband's university friends occupy much space in the novel, and are told with freshness and humour. The latter part of the book is occupied with unpleasant intrigues in a petty German court, in which the professor's naïve trustfulness nearly leads his wife into serious troubles. In the end the cover of the lost manuscript is discovered, but its contents are found to have been destroyed.

The story is a happy satire upon the pedantry, the affectations, the want of worldly wisdom and *savoir-faire* of German professors. It is unfortunate that its interest and merit flag towards the

end, that there are too many digressions, too many characters introduced foreign to the plot, too many reflections that hinder the progress of the story. Judiciously abbreviated it would be admirable.

After writing these two novels, Freytag's imaginative productiveness ceased for a time, during which ensued the great political events of German history. Then in 1872 he issued the first instalment of a novelistic cycle, called *Die Ahnen*, which is to celebrate the mighty deeds of the German nation from the earliest historic times to the present day. Of this projected work five portions have been issued, the last, *Die Geschwister*, carrying down the history to the terrible Thirty years' war, that laid waste Germany materially and mentally, and retarded her civilisation for two centuries. *Ingo und Ingraban* dealt with the days of Paganism, *Das Nest der Zaunkönige* with the introduction of Christianity into the land, *Die Brüder des deutschen Hauses* depicts the period when the Catholic Church was triumphant, while *Marcus König* deals with the Reformation movement. The whole series is connected by an hereditary thread, one family in successive centuries being the heroes of each story. In this great work Freytag's characteristic failings are often more prominent than his merits. None of the novels attain the standard of his earlier productions; an atmosphere of effort hangs around them, a too evident ulterior tendency, a too ob-

trusive archæological vigilance, a too studied attention to the linguistic divergencies of the various ages. Replete with internal evidences of historical accuracy, they resemble rather the modern version of some old chronicle than a work the purpose of which is to amuse as well as to instruct. For readers who love to imbibe their historical knowledge under the guise of romance, they can be commended ; but as works of art they must be censured. Freytag, in lending himself to fan the newly-awakened patriotism and self-confidence of his nation, has sacrificed much of his purely literary worth ; and since the series is far from complete, we fear that no more stories of universal interest can be looked for from his pen. This is a matter for regret. Much of his freshness, his humour, has been sacrificed in these efforts at national glorification ; his imagination is necessarily hampered ; his range circumscribed. Whoever would see Freytag at his best must turn to the earlier romances ; and it is from one of these, the *Verlorene Handschrift*, that we quote the following passage :

The German Professor.

Professors' wives also have trouble with their husbands. Sometimes when Ilse was seated in company with her intimate friends—with Madame Raschke, Madame Struvelius, or little Madame

Günther—at one of those confidential coffee-parties which they did not altogether despise, many things would come to light.

The conversation with these intellectual women was certainly very interesting. It is true the talk sometimes passed lightly over the heads of the servants, and sometimes housekeeping troubles ventured out of the pond of pleasant talk like croaking frogs. To Ilse's surprise, she found that even Flaminia Struvelius could discourse seriously about preserving little gherkins, and that she sought closely for the marks of youth in a plucked goose. The merry Madame Günther aroused horror and laughter in more experienced married women, when she asserted that she could not endure the crying of little children, and that, from the very first, she would force her child (which she had not yet got) to proper silence by chastisement. Thus conversation sometimes left greater subjects to stray into this domain. And when unimportant subjects were reviewed, it naturally came about that the men were honoured by a quiet discussion. At such times it was evident that, although the subject under consideration was men in general, each of the wives was thinking of her own husband, and that each silently carried about a secret bundle of cares, and justified the conclusion of her hearers that that husband too must be difficult to manage. Madame Raschke's troubles could not be concealed;

the whole town knew them. It was notorious that one market-day her husband had gone to the university in his dressing-gown—in a brilliant dressing-gown, blue and orange, with a Turkish pattern. His students, who loved him dearly, and were well aware of his habits, could not succeed in suppressing a loud laugh ; and Raschke had calmly hung the dressing-gown over his pulpit, held his lecture in his shirt-sleeves, and returned home in one of the students' overcoats. Since that time Madame Raschke never let her husband go out without herself inspecting him. It also appeared that all these ten years he had not been able to learn his way about the town, and she dared not change her residence, because she was quite sure that her professor would never remember it, and always return to his old home. Struvelius also occasioned much anxiety. Ilse knew about the last and greatest cause ; but it also came to light that he expected his wife to read Latin proof-sheets, as she knew something of that language. Besides, he was quite incapable of refusing commissions to amiable wine-merchants. At her marriage Madame Struvelius had found a whole cellar full of large and small wine-casks, none of which had been drawn off, while he complained bitterly that no wine was ever brought into his cellar. Even little Madame Günther related that her husband could not give up night-work ; and that once, when he

wandered with a lamp among his books, he came too near the curtain, which caught fire. He tore it off, and, in so doing, burnt his hands, and burst into the bedroom with blackened fingers in great alarm, and resembling an Othello more than a mineralogist.

Ilse did not tell anything of her short career ; but she also had opportunities for gaining experience. It is true her husband was moderate about night-work ; he also knew something about wine, and occasionally drank a glass, as a German professor should. But as for eating, that was a sad story. It is not a good thing to care too much about food, and certainly does not befit a professor ; but when a man does not in the least know what he is eating, and mistakes the leg of a duck for that of a goose, it is no pleasure to those who try to provide well for him. He was not the slightest use, as far as carving was concerned. He was far better acquainted with the tough Stymphalian birds, which Hercules had slain, and the inedible Phoenix, of which his Tacitus speaks with much respect, than with the anatomy of a turkey. It is true Ilse was not one of those women whose chief pleasure is to stand all day long in the kitchen ; but she understood her work, and it was a matter of pride worthily to fulfil her functions, as mistress, in providing her husband's dinner. All her efforts were vain. Now and then he made an attempt to

praise the dinner, but Ilse soon discovered that his heart had no part in it. True, when she set a beautiful pheasant before him, and he noticed, from her manner of watching him, that a remark on his part was expected, he praised the cook for having bought such a beautiful fowl. Ilse sighed, and tried to explain the difference to him, and after dinner Gabriel said to her,

‘It is no use ; I know the master—he does not understand about eating.’

Since that time Ilse had to be satisfied with the appreciation shown to her by some of the gentlemen of her tea-table. That was, however, no compensation. In this respect the doctor was not very praiseworthy ; and it was distressing and humiliating to see the two over a brace of snipes that her father had sent.

However, the professor regarded the doctor as exceptionally practical, because he understood something about buying and arranging, and he was accustomed to ask his friend’s advice about many daily occurrences. One day the tailor brought some patterns of cloth for a new coat. The professor gazed absently at the coloured patterns in the open book.

‘Ilse, send across to the doctor to come and help me choose.’

Ilse sent, but unwillingly. Really, in buying a coat, the doctor’s assistance was not needed ; and

if her husband could not make up his mind, was not she there? But, for the present, there was nothing to be done ; the doctor imperiously settled about her husband's coat, waistcoat, and other articles of clothing. Ilse listened in silence to the discussion, but she felt heartily angry with the doctor and a little with her own lord and master. She silently determined that things could not go on thus, made a hasty calculation with her housekeeping money, sent for the tailor to her room, and herself ordered a second suit for her husband, telling him to make this one first. When this suit was brought home she called her husband, and asked how he liked the beautiful suit. He praised it, and she said,

‘It is for you. I try to look as nice as possible to please you ; do for once wear, in my honour, what I have chosen for you. If I have been successful, let me choose for you in future, and undertake the responsibility of your wardrobe.’

* * * * *

Once in the twilight, Professor Raschke called, and expressed his willingness to stay the evening. Felix sent the servant to the professor's wife, to prevent any anxiety about her husband. As Raschke was Ilse's favourite among the learned men, she gave an order in the kitchen which was to give him pleasure. This order sentenced to

death some chickens which had shortly before been brought home alive. The gentlemen were already seated in Ilse's room, when a cry of distress was heard in the kitchen, and the cook showed a pale face at the door and called out her mistress. She found that the girl's feelings had prevented her from accomplishing the work of death. As Gabriel usually performed the necessary murders in some out-of-the-way place, she did not know what to do to-day; a frightened attempt had been unsuccessful, and Ilse was forced to perform the unavoidable task herself. When she came back, Felix unfortunately asked the reason of the excitement, and Ilse told in a few words what had occurred.

The fowls appeared at table; they did the cook no dishonour. Ilse carved and served them. But her husband pushed away his plate, and Raschke, out of politeness, worked away a little at his slice of the breast, but could hardly swallow a morsel. Ilse looked with surprise at both men.

'Why do you not eat anything, Professor Raschke?' she asked at length, forcing herself to be calm.

'It is only a sentimental weakness,' replied Raschke; 'and you are quite right—it is folly. I am still distressed by the cries of this poor roasted creature.'

'You too, Felix?' asked Ilse eagerly.

‘Yes,’ replied he. ‘Is it not possible to make the killing unperceived?’

‘Not always,’ answered Ilse, somewhat hurt, ‘when space is small and the kitchen so near.’ She rang, and had the unfortunate dish carried out. ‘Since people in the town have such an objection to killing, they ought to eat no meat!’

‘You are quite right,’ repeated Raschke, in a conciliating manner; ‘and our susceptibility can hardly be justified. We object to the mode of preparation, and generally thoroughly enjoy what is prepared. But those who are accustomed to regard animal life with sympathy are always distressed by the destruction of an organism for egoistic purposes, when it is accomplished in a manner to which they do not happen to be used. For there is something mysterious to us in the whole life of animals. The same vitality that we observe in ourselves is also active in them, but confined by an organisation otherwise limited than ours, and, on the whole, more imperfect.’

‘How can you compare their souls with those of human beings?’ exclaimed Ilse—‘the unreasoning with the reasoning, the transitory with the eternal!’

‘As for the unreasoning, dear madam, it is a word that in this case conveys no particular meaning. However great the difference between man and animal may be, it is difficult to determine it;

and here also we should be modest. We know very little about animals, even about those who always live with us. I must confess that an occasional attempt at better understanding this incomprehensible subject has inspired me with respect and reverence for this strange existence, sometimes accompanied by fear. I will not allow any one belonging to me to have any affection for an animal. This is also from a tenderness of feeling which I admit is pedantic. But the influence of the human mind upon animals appears to me mysterious and strange ; it often develops in these creatures habits which, in some respects, make them resemble man. Besides, there is something so touching in their affectionate bearing to ourselves, that we often waste more affection and feeling on an animal than is good for it or for us.'

'And yet animals remain what they have been since the Creation,' exclaimed Ilse, 'unchanged in their instincts and likings ! We can teach a bird, and force a dog to bring us what he himself would like to eat ; but that is only external force. If they are left to themselves, their habits and nature remain unchanged, and they are completely wanting in what we call culture.'

'We cannot be absolutely certain about that either,' continued Raschke. 'We do not know whether every kind of animal may not possess a culture and a history, which extends from the first

generation to the last. It is quite possible that knowledge, virtuosoships, and understanding of the world, as far as animals can possess this, may have changed in a more limited circle just as much as they have in man. It is an arbitrary assumption that the birds sang just as they do now a thousand years ago. I am of opinion that the wolf and lynx on cultivated soil are in the same position as the last remains of the Indian tribes among the white men; while those animals who live in tolerable harmony with mankind, like sparrows and other little creatures, even bees, become wiser in their fashion, and in the course of time make progress—a progress which we divine in certain cases, but which science is as yet incapable of determining.’

‘Our head-forester will be very ready to agree with you there,’ said Ilse, more calmly; ‘he complains bitterly that the finches of our neighbourhood have, within memory of man, come to sing much worse, because all the best songsters have been caught, and the young ones no longer learn properly.’

‘Excellent!’ exclaimed Raschke. ‘And just as among animals of the same kind there are clever and ignorant ones, we may also assume that some have an intellectual labour allotted them which lasts beyond their own lives. The experience of an old raven, or the melodious tune of a sweet-singing nightingale, may not be lost to future

generations, but have a certain duration even among them. In this way, then, we may speak of culture and improvement among the animals. But as for the kitchen, there we must confess that we became sensitive at the wrong moment, to the disadvantage of our common comfort ; and I hope you are not angry with us on that account, dear friend.'

'For this time it shall be forgotten,' replied Ilse appeased : 'next time I will give you boiled eggs ; there can be no objection to those.'

'There is something curious about eggs, too,' replied Raschke ; 'but I will refrain from a further consideration of that subject.'

* * * * *

Raschke pushed his chair under the table.

'Then I will go for to-day ; for our discussion has disturbed me, and I should be a bad companion. It is the first time, dear madam, that I leave your house amid unpleasant sensations ; and not the least painful remembrance is that my ill-timed defence of chickens' souls has roused your wrath also.'

Ilse looked sorrowfully at the worthy man's excited countenance ; and as a means of calming his troubled thoughts, and exhorting him to retain their friendship, she entreated,

'But I cannot let you off the poor fowl. You really must eat it ; and I will see that your wife gives it you for breakfast to-morrow morning.'

Raschke was wandering about in the anteroom. Here too was confusion. Gabriel had not yet returned from his distant errand ; the cook had left the remains of the meal standing on a side-table till his return ; and Raschke had to find his great-coat by himself. He rummaged among the clothes, and seized hold of a coat and a hat. As he was not as absent as usual to-day, a glance at the despised supper reminded him just in time that he was to eat a fowl ; so he seized hold of the newspaper which Gabriel had laid ready for his master, hastily took one of the chickens out of the dish, wrapped it in the journal and thrust it in his pocket, agreeably surprised at the depth and capaciousness it revealed. Then he rushed past the astonished cook, and out of the house. When he opened the door of the *étage* he stumbled against something that was crouching on the threshold. He heard a horrible growling behind him, and stormed down the stairs and out of doors.

The words of the friend whom he had left now came into his mind. Werner's whole bearing was very characteristic ; and there was something fine about it. It was strange that, in a moment of anger, Werner's face had acquired a sudden resemblance to a bulldog's. Here the direct chain of the philosopher's contemplations was crossed by the remembrance of the conversation on animals' souls.

‘It is really a pity that it is still so difficult to determine an animal’s expression of soul. If we could succeed in that, science would gain. For if we could compare in all their minutiae the expression and gestures of human beings and higher animals, we might make most interesting deductions from their common peculiarities and their particular differences. In this way the natural origin of their dramatic movements, and perhaps some new laws, would be discovered.’

While the philosopher was pondering thus he felt a continued pulling at his coattails. As his wife was in the habit of giving him a gentle pull when he was walking next her absorbed in thought and they met some acquaintance, he took no further notice of it, but took off his hat, and, bowing politely towards the railing of the bridge, said ‘Good-evening.’

‘These common and original elements in the mimic expression of human beings and higher animals might, if rightly understood, even open out new vistas into the great mystery of life.’ Another pull. Raschke mechanically took off his hat. Another pull. ‘Thank you, dear Aurelia, I did bow.’ As he spoke, the thought crossed his mind that his wife would not pull at his coat so low down. It was not she, but his little daughter Bertha who was pulling ; for she often walked gravely next him, and, like her mother, pulled at the bell for bows.

‘That will do, my dear,’ said he, as Bertha continued to snatch and pull at his coattails. ‘Come here, you little rogue!’ and he absently put his hand behind him to seize the little tease. He seized hold of something round and shaggy; he felt sharp teeth on his fingers, and turned with a start. There he saw in the lamplight a reddish monster with a big head, shaggy hair, and a little tassel that fell back into its hind-legs in lieu of a tail. His wife and daughter were horribly transformed; and he gazed in surprise on this indistinct creature which seated itself before him, and glared at him in silence.

‘A strange adventure!’ exclaimed Raschke. ‘What are you, unknown creature? Presumably a dog. Away with you!’ The animal retreated a few steps. Raschke continued his meditations. ‘If we trace back the expression and gestures of the affections to their original forms in this manner, one of the most active laws would certainly prove to be the endeavour to attract or repel the extraneous. It would be instructive to distinguish, by means of these involuntary movements of men and animals, what is essential and what conventional. Away, dog! Do me a favour and go home. What does he want with me? Evidently he belongs to Werner’s domain. The poor creature will assuredly lose itself in the town under the dominion of an *idée fixe*.’

Meantime Speihahn's attacks were becoming more violent ; and now he was marching in a quite unnatural and purely conventional manner, on his hind-legs, while his fore-paws were leaning against the professor's back, and his teeth were actually biting into the coat.

A belated shoemaker's boy stood still and beat his leathern apron. 'Is not the master ashamed to let his poor apprentice push him along like that?' In truth, the dog behind the man looked like a dwarf pushing a giant along the ice.

Raschke's interest in the dog's thoughts increased. He stood still near a lantern, examined and felt his coat. This coat had developed a velvet collar and very long sleeves, advantages that the philosopher had never yet remarked in his great-coat. Now the matter became clear to him : absorbed in thought, he had chosen a wrong coat, and the worthy dog insisted on saving his master's garment, and making the thief aware that there was something wrong. Raschke was so pleased with this sagacity that he turned round, addressed some kind words to Speihahn, and made an attempt to stroke his shaggy hair. The dog again snapped at his hand. 'You are quite right to be angry with me,' replied Raschke ; 'I will prove to you that I acknowledge my fault.' He took off the coat and hung it over his arm. 'Yes, it is much heavier than my own.' He walked on cheerfully in his

thin coat, and observed with satisfaction that the dog abandoned the attacks on his back. But instead, Speihahn sprang up on his side, and again bit at the coat and the hand, and growled unpleasantly.

The professor got angry with the dog, and when he came to a bench on the promenade, he laid down the coat, intending to face the dog seriously, and drive him home. In this manner he got rid of the dog, but also of the coat. For Speihahn sprang upon the bench with a mighty bound, placed himself astride the coat, and met the professor, who tried to drive him away, with hideous growling and snarling.

‘It is Werner’s coat,’ said the professor, ‘and it is Werner’s dog ; it would be wrong to beat the poor creature because it is becoming violent in its fidelity, and it would be wrong to leave the dog and the coat.’ So he remained standing before the dog and speaking kindly to him ; but Speihahn no longer took any notice of the professor ; he turned against the coat itself, which he scratched, rummaged, and bit. Raschke saw that the coat could not long endure such rage. ‘He is frantic or mad,’ said he suspiciously. ‘I shall have to use force against you after all, poor creature ;’ and he considered whether he should also jump upon the seat and push the mad creature by a violent kick into the water, or whether it would be better to open

the inevitable attack from below. He resolved on the latter course, and looked round to see whether he could anywhere discover a stone or stick to throw at the raging beast. As he looked, he observed the trees and the dark sky above him, and the place seemed quite unfamiliar. 'Has magic been at work here?' he exclaimed, with amusement. He turned politely to a solitary wanderer who was passing that way: 'Would you kindly tell me in what part of the town we are? And could you perhaps lend me your stick for a moment?'

'Indeed,' angrily replied the person addressed, 'those are very suspicious questions. I want my stick myself at night. Who are you, sir?' The stranger approached the professor menacingly.

'I am peaceable,' replied Raschke, 'and by no means inclined to violent attacks. A quarrel has arisen between me and the animal on this seat for the possession of a coat, and I should be much obliged to you if you would drive the dog away from the coat. But I beg you not to hurt the animal any more than is absolutely necessary.'

'Is that your coat there?' asked the man.

'Unfortunately I cannot give you an affirmative answer,' replied Raschke conscientiously.

'There must be something wrong here,' exclaimed the stranger, again eyeing the professor suspiciously.

'There is indeed,' replied Raschke. 'The dog

is out of his mind ; the coat is exchanged, and I do not know where we are.'

'Close to the valley-gate, Professor Raschke,' answered the voice of Gabriel, who hastily joined the group. 'Excuse me, but what brings you here ?'

'Capital !' exclaimed Raschke joyously. 'Pray take charge of this coat and this dog.'

Gabriel gazed in amazement at Speihahn, who was now lying on the coat and bending his head before his friend. Gabriel threw down the dog and seized the coat. 'Why, that is our greatcoat !' exclaimed he.

'Yes, Gabriel,' said the professor, 'that was my mistake, and the dog has shown marvellous fidelity to the coat.'

'Fidelity !' exclaimed Gabriel indignantly, as he drew a parcel out of the coat-pocket. 'It was greedy selfishness, sir ; there must be some food in this pocket.'

'Yes, true,' exclaimed Raschke ; 'it is all the chicken's fault. Give me the parcel, Gabriel, I must eat the fowl myself ; and we might bid each other good-night now with mutual satisfaction, if you would just show me my way a little among these trees.'

'But you must not go home in the night-air without an overcoat,' said Gabriel considerately. 'We are not far from our house ; the best way

would really be for you to come back with me, sir.'

Raschke considered and laughed.

'You are right, Gabriel ; my departure was awkward ; and to-day an animal's soul has restored a man's soul to order.'

'If you mean this dog,' said Gabriel, 'it would be the first time he did anything good. I see, he must have followed you from our door ; for I put little bones there for him of an evening.'

'Just now he seemed not to be quite in his right mind,' said the professor.

'He is cunning enough when he pleases,' continued Gabriel mysteriously ; 'but if I were to speak of my experiences with this dog—'

'Do speak, Gabriel,' eagerly exclaimed the philosopher. 'There is nothing so valuable concerning animals as a truthful statement from those who have carefully observed them.'

'I may say that I have done so,' confirmed Gabriel, with satisfaction ; 'and if you want to know exactly what he is, I can assure you that he is enchanted, he is dishonest, he is poisoned, and he is possessed by hatred of mankind.'

'Ah, indeed !' replied the professor, somewhat disconcerted. 'I see it is much more difficult to look into a dog's heart than into a professor's.'

Speihahn crept along silent and suppressed, and listened to the praises that fell to his lot, while

Professor Raschke, conducted by Gabriel, returned to the house by the park. Gabriel opened the sitting-room door, and announced,

‘Professor Raschke.’

Ilse extended both her hands to him.

‘Welcome, welcome, dear Professor Raschke!’ and led him to her husband’s study.

‘Here I am again,’ said Raschke cheerfully, ‘after wandering as in a fairy tale. What has brought me back were two animals, who showed me the right way—a roast fowl and a poisoned dog.’

Felix sprang up ; the men greeted one another warmly, shaking hands, and, after all misadventures, spent a happy evening.

When Raschke had gone home late, Gabriel said sadly to his mistress,

‘This was the new coat ; the fowl and the dog have put it in a horrible plight.’

CABALLERO.

BORN IN MORGES, 1797 ; DIED IN SEVILLE,
APRIL 7, 1877.

CABALLERO.

FERNAN CABALLERO is, perhaps, one of the most intensely national writers any country can boast. Her pages abound in local colour, and are full of all the quick wit, fierce passion, intense bigotry, and conservative spirit of the Spanish people. She has become the typical Spanish, and, above all, Andalusian, writer ; and not only this, but she has almost created the modern Spanish novel ; for until her time ordinary Spanish life was not thought sufficiently interesting for romance. Novelists went far afield, feebly imitating their Gallic neighbours. Yet, strangely enough, this writer, who loves Spain so passionately, to whom this land was her one great source of inspiration, was not of purely Spanish extraction. Fernan Caballero is a pseudonym of which the secrecy was long preserved. Her true name was Cecilia Böhl von Faber ; for her father was a German merchant, who had settled in Spain and married a Spanish wife. Cecilia was born at Morges, in Switzerland. Her infancy was spent in Spain ; but at the age of six she was sent to Germany to be educated, and did not return till she was sixteen.

From her father, who was no mean *connoisseur* of Spanish literature, and who has left some valuable and erudite books upon early Spanish poetry, the daughter imbibed a love for the national literature, and for all evidences of national life in the shape of ballads and legends. This, and the nature of her training, made her lean to the romantic school, from the influence of which she never freed herself. Moreover, the conservative surroundings of Spain caused her to love the past with ardent affection, and rendered her unable to comprehend the aspirations and tendencies of our more positive age. Indeed, she detested all evidences of modern life, even though they were improvements ; a fact which, of course, she does not admit, but condemns indiscriminately every reform and advance from liberal ideas down to railroads. But, perhaps, this very fierce exclusiveness gives an enhanced local tone to her novels ; for she probably reproduces in these feelings those of average Spain, content to live upon the barren recollections of a glorious past, and indifferent to the demands of the present.

At the early age of sixteen, Cecilia von Faber married a Major Planells, with whom she went to America. In a few years he left her a widow. She soon after espoused the Marquis Arco-Hermoso; and when he also died within a few years she entered the wedded state for the third time, marrying Señor de Arrom, a lawyer, who was made Spanish

Consul in Australia, whither she did not follow him, and where he died in 1863. After his death Queen Isabella offered her a home in the famous old Moorish habitation, the Alcazar, at Seville; and here she lived until her death, preserving to the last her mental freshness and vigour.

It is a curious and highly interesting fact that Fernan Caballero never wrote until she was past fifty years of age. *La Gaviota* ('The Sea-gull') was the name of her first novel—a story that deals both with life in a secluded Spanish village, and life in Seville, with its *tertulias*—the Spanish 'at home.' It is difficult to say whether the author is at her best when vigorously and graphically delineating rustic existence, or drawing with a subtle pencil the frivolities and gaiety of Spanish social life, with its strange mixture of punctilious formality and *sans gêne*. All Caballero's peculiar powers, her strength and her weaknesses, were at once made manifest in this novel, which met with a deserved success, and encouraged her to proceed. *La Familia de Alvareda* may be put upon a level with *La Gaviota* for originality and strength. It deals exclusively with the Andalusian peasant, gay, fairly industrious, mentally restricted, but endowed with a certain mother-wit and shrewd common sense, which even a system of the most oppressive bigotry has not been able entirely to quench. *Elia*, *Clemencia*, *Las Lagrimas*, are also Andalusian

stories, full of descriptions of the scenery and manners of this province. Besides depicting the life of the labourers and the aristocracy, Fernan Caballero has preserved in her pages the proverbs and legends that abound among these peoples, and are only handed down from mouth to mouth. A Spaniard is never at a loss for an illustrative proverb, as witness Sancho Panza; and proverbs as terse and shrewd as his are scattered throughout her pages, gleaned from the lips of the people. Nor does she ever weary of singing the praises of Andalusia, with its intense blue sky, its folk-tales, its exquisite landscape, its lighthearted people. Her vista is neither wide nor varied, but she is versatile within its range. Her tone is always fresh; there is nothing unhealthy or unpleasant in any of her pages. The form of her stories is imperfect; she seems to have been quite indifferent to the art of construction, or perhaps she began to write too late to acquire it. Her tales are apt to be too long, they need concentration; their want of a well-rounded plot gives them something of a *dilettante* character, which, however, their skilful composition soon belies. She is too prone not only to digress, but to let these digressions assume undue proportions; thus giving her stories the character of a series of episodes rather than of a united whole. These faults, however, are redeemed, and her most rambling tales made readable, by her admirable power of creating individuals.

and interesting us in their fate. Her portraits of men and women are excellent ; they are real flesh-and-blood personages, portrayed with fine observation, and often with much humour. Humour, indeed, is one of her salient features. It peeps out pleasantly even when she is presenting us with her most ultramontane and earnest side. For example, while insisting with ardour upon the need of piety, and of teaching religion among men, she cannot deny that the parrot-like system of learning by rote, pursued by the priests, may have a strange result ; at least she must have been aware to what deductions the reader must inevitably be led, when she tells him, immediately after, the anecdote of how a child insisted that there were five Gods ; and on being asked to explain, enumerated the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, the Trinity, and one God. Our author regards unthinking and unconditional obedience to the Church as a necessary factor in society, and it is because modern society takes upon itself to think that she hates it so cordially. In her eyes it is utterly corrupt ; but as she stands outside of it, and is thoroughly out of sympathy with its aims, she often confuses cause and effect. She also regards the rigid demarcation of classes as a bulwark to her land. It is old Spain that she loves, not that new one, touched by modern cosmopolitan civilisation, which is feebly struggling into existence. It is old Spain she paints with a master's

touch, and the truth of her pictures has never been contested by the Spaniards themselves ; while to a stranger they have an air, an internal evidence of veracity, indescribable, but indisputable. Even the very fact, that while reading her stories we fancy that we are reading of things that happened two hundred years ago, adds to, rather than detracts from, this impression ; for it coincides with all we learn of the political events in the Peninsula, whose attempt to enter into the ranks of modern thought only dates from a few years back, and on which the mighty convulsion of the French revolution has left no mark. We understand modern Catholic Spain the better for reading Fernan Caballero's novels, while at the same time procuring for ourselves the enjoyment of entering on new and unbroken soil, and coming into contact with fresh and unconventional characters. To those inclined to carp at her stories as idealised or imaginative delineations of folk-life, she wrote, with the proud assurance of a justified self-consciousness :

‘ Many years of unremitting study, pursued *con amore*, allow me to assure those who find fault with my portrayal of popular life, that they are less acquainted with the theme than I am.’

And that she was justified in her assurance is testified by her European fame and the panegyrics of her countrymen. When her first work was published, one of the most competent Spanish critics wrote of

it: 'This is the first dawn of a beautiful day, the first bloom of a poetic crown which will encircle the head of a Spanish Walter Scott;' and the name of Spanish Walter Scott has been constantly accorded to her by her countrymen. How accurately she herself gauged her powers and sketched her aims is shown by her preface to *La Gaviota* :

'In composing this light work,' she writes, 'we did not intend to write a novel, but strove to give an exact and true idea of Spain, of the manners of its people, of their characters, of their habits. We desired to sketch the home-life of the people in the higher and lower classes, to depict their language, their faith, their traditions, their legends. What we have sought, above all, is to paint after Nature, and with the most scrupulous exactitude, the objects and persons brought forward. Therefore our readers will seek in vain amid our actors for accomplished heroes or consummate villains, such as are found in the romances of chivalry or in melodramas. Our ambition has been to give as true an idea as possible of Spain and the Spaniards. We have tried to dissipate those monstrous prejudices transmitted and preserved like Egyptian mummies from generation to generation. It seemed to us that the best means of attaining this end was to replace with pictures traced by a Spanish pen those false sketches sprung from the pens of strangers.'

Such was Fernan Caballero's programme at start-

ing, a programme to which she has faithfully adhered. In these lines, written by herself, we have a complete picture of the nature of her works.

Unfortunately it is impossible to translate the best of Fernan Caballero, though it has been attempted. Her chief power lies in depicting the Andalusian peasant, full of fun, repartee, and *gracia*, playing upon words in every sentence. In another mood Caballero is the Spanish Miss Yonge, only the sentimental devoutness of her heroines, and their devotion to saints and virgins, would sound strange to English ears.

The story from which we take our extract deals with the unfortunate attempt of the Spanish Liberals, in 1822, to force their king to grant them a constitution.

*The Old and the New, or Three Souls too good for
this World.*

Very early next morning Leopoldo received a letter without signature, which a sailor handed him. But Leopoldo recognised the handwriting, which was Valverde's. The note ran as follows :

‘Leopoldo, you are incorrigible, and were only born to bring your friends to despair. You were so rash as to appear at a public promenade, to bow to a very well-known lady, and to talk to her for some time. Her little daughter has spoken of it,

and betrayed your residence. This very morning you will be arrested. To prevent this put on the sailor's dress which the bearer of this letter—a man who possesses my full confidence—will give you, and then follow him. He will also see that your property is brought to a safe place.'

As soon as Leopoldo had read this letter he packed up his belongings, put on the sailor's dress that had been brought him, wrote a few lines to Don José—who had gone to mass with his family—in which he informed him of his sudden departure, took leave of him, and begged him to purchase, with the ten gold ounces which accompanied the letter, some keepsake for his wife and sister. He then added, to his letter to Ramon Ortiz, the following postscript :

'I have been discovered, and must fly. The child Margarita—that little Havanese magpie, that chattering little tell-tale—has betrayed me. I have no time to write more. I shall acquaint you with the future fortunes of your friend, the most persecuted and perpetually wandering of men.'

He then closed both letters ; but, in his customary absence of mind, he changed the addresses, and directed the one destined for Ramon Ortiz to Don José, and Don José's to Ramon Ortiz. The former he left on the sitting-room table with the ten ounces, and then followed his guide. Half an hour later the family returned from mass.

‘Where is Don Leopoldo?’ asked Don José, who was the last to arrive.

‘I suppose he is not up yet,’ replied his wife.

‘If he did not go to bed so late—’ grumbled Don José.

‘Poor fellow! Do let him sleep; young people always love sleep,’ said Doña Escolastica.

‘Yes, yes; let him sleep,’ cried Doña Liberata. ‘As long as he sleeps he can neither feel cross, nor vexed, nor do harm.’

‘Poor fellow!—always poor fellow!’ grumbled Don José. ‘You are so taken with the young gentleman, that you will end by saying your prayers to him. Poor fellow! Poor is the devil, who is never to see God. That may well be his fate if he continues his present path.’

‘Pepe, I hardly know you,’ said his sister; ‘you judge him quite wrongly. Don Leopoldo is a true Christian, and his pranks are only from high spirits.’

‘And besides, he does not mean badly,’ added his wife; ‘there is no malice about him, and he feels very kindly towards us.’

Meantime Don José had approached the table, and now he noticed the letter which Leopoldo had placed there.

A letter for Don José! That was an event quite too extraordinary.

‘Whoever can have had to write to me?’ thought

he, as he drew his spectacles out of their black-leathern case.

At that moment Doña Liberata, who had gone into the guest's room, came hurrying back with her quick little steps, and exclaimed, in the greatest terror,

‘Pepe! Escolastica! He is not in his room, he is not in his bed, he is nowhere!’

‘Good Heavens! what can have become of him?’ exclaimed Doña Escolastica, folding her hands.

‘Stuff! He has sailed off with a fresh breeze,’ said Don José, ‘without saying “By your leave,” in the middle of the night, just as he entered.’

‘I wonder if this letter is from the poor fellow? Pepe, brother, do read it!’

While Don José put his large glasses on his nose, his wife and sister muttered,

‘St. Raphael guide him! St. Gaëtan protect him!’

Don José opened the letter, and began to read:

‘“Where, my good fellow, do you suppose that your dearly-beloved chum now finds himself?”

‘My dearly-beloved chum!’ said Don José. ‘Where does this intimacy come from? And to call me his good fellow! That is hardly decent towards a man of my years.’

‘That is only his friendly way,’ said his wife.

‘Stuff and nonsense!’ said the reader, and con-

tinued: “He has become the victim of tyranny and despotism.”

‘The old story!’ grumbled Don José—“of tyranny and despotism, and is shut up at Port St. Mary, which might well be called ‘Port-of-all-the-devils’—”

‘A good beginning,’ remarked the reader. “Port-of-all-the-devils, hidden away in the most disenchanted castle in the world.”’

‘Quite right,’ said Doña Liberata, ‘since the bull about the holy crusade—’

Don José continued without letting himself be interrupted: “In the Castle of Fee-fi-fo-fum, which contains as many fools as inhabitants.”’

Don José stopped reading, glanced at his wife and sister, who were looking down to the ground, and went on reading:

“Imagine your friend—the enthusiast for freedom and advancement, the worshipper of the new, the fanatic of elegance—locked up in a common casual ward, full of hypocrisy and servilism, with a chaplain who knows no other light than that of his altar-candle.”’

‘*Jesus Maria!* Good God! Good God!’ exclaimed Doña Escolastica and Doña Liberata in one breath.

Don José continued, after clearing his throat, in a loud and angry manner:

“A sacristan with one extinguisher in his hand

and another over his understanding and his extinguished eyes, with two old devotees uglier than Barabbas—”

‘Do you hear *that*, Liberata?’

‘Than whom?’ asked she, who had not quite heard, because Don José, who had hitherto read loud and angrily, was almost choked on arriving at the compliments addressed to his wife and sister.

‘That we are uglier than Barabbas!’ shouted her sister-in-law into her ear, rather stiffly, but without showing any signs of anger.

‘Well, that is rather exaggerated,’ said Doña Liberata.

‘Poor fellow! A true Christian!’ said Don José scornfully. ‘Better get a rattle for the blessed infant!’

“Uglier than Barabbas! . . . who want to force me to tell my beads with them like a hypocrite, and to make a vow to St. Gaëtan, their patron saint; finally, with a schoolmaster—”

‘In this fellow’s opinion,’ remarked the reader, ‘none but hypocrites pray. But let us go on,’ continued he, as he smoothed out the letter, and approached the window; ‘now this truthful angel is coming to me, and now comes the master-stroke :

“With—a—a—schoolmaster, who physically and morally is a two-legged donkey, not omitting the long immoderate ears peculiar to his race.”

‘Wha-at ? Wha-at ?’ exclaimed Don José, whose just-mentioned ears had turned scarlet, and whose underlip was more protruded than ever. ‘Well, what do you say now to the poor fellow, the true Christian ? He knows how to call names, the dear innocent ! Liberal ! Redder than red ! In that matter, they are of the first water. And to take French leave, with a sackful of insults and impertinences as his only good-bye for us ! Can that sort of thing be conceived among decent people ?’

‘It is not as it should be,’ said Doña Liberata.

‘No, it is not the usual thing,’ added Doña Escolastica.

Don José continued reading :

“ ‘This rhinoceros makes my blood boil to such an extent, with his reactionary, monarchical, and theological ideas—”’

‘Rhinoceros ! I say, Pepe, what’s that ?’ asked his wife.

‘That is,’ replied he furiously,—‘that is an animal—an enormous animal ; cousin, countryman, and relation to the elephant !’

‘What a thoughtless young man !’ said Doña Liberata.

‘What an insane fanatic rascal !’ corrected Don José, panting with rage. ‘As mad as a four-year-old bull, who upsets everything that comes in his way !’

‘Go on, Pepe ; go on,’ begged his wife ; ‘let us see what comes of it all.’

‘O yes, let us go on,’ said he ; ‘it is so very amusing to read ; and we each have a nice time of it.’

And with a violent gesture, Don José again pulled out the letter, and continued :

“ Rhinoceros . . . blood boil . . . that I have intermittent fits of a ferocious impulse to strangle him with my own hands.”

On arriving at this paragraph the letter fell from Don José’s hands, and he turned pale.

‘Murderous intentions ! Blessed angels ! Who would have believed that he could harbour such thoughts ! And such a gentleman ! so gallant !’ exclaimed Doña Escolastica.

‘So gallant ! Yes, you said that before ; there is just the point of the matter,’ continued Don José. ‘A bad Christian, with neither faith nor conscience ; a man to whom we have shown nothing but kindness, and who has fits of wanting to murder a fellow-creature—for the sole reason that he has heard the word of God from his lips. That is wickedness, unheard-of ingratitude ?’

‘But the little kindness we have shown him need not weigh so very much on us, Pepe,’ said Doña Liberata. ‘The kindness that is received with gratitude gets its reward from the receiver ; but God pays for the benefits that are taken with-

out thanks ; for nothing that men do, whether good or evil, remains unpaid.'

'If he were to come back we should do everything we could for him, should we not, José?' added Doña Escolastica.

'Except receive him into our house again,' said her husband ; 'for once bit, twice shy ; so do me the favour to shut up the kitchen-window to-night, even if you are suffocated by heat ; for when we least expect it the good-for-nothing might climb in again some fine evening : he knows the way now.'

'But what is there in this paper?' asked Doña Liberata, who had approached the table.

She unfolded the paper, and before her eyes shone the ten gold ounces, which belonged to the letter meant for Don José, which, however, had taken its way to Cadiz.

'There you may see again what a head this young man had,' said Don José. 'He has forgotten his money — actually ! He is the veriest nincompoop.'

'Good Heavens ! and how soon he will miss it, poor fellow !' cried Doña Liberata.

'Pepe, could we not send it after him?' asked his wife.

'Where to, you dear simpleton?' exclaimed her husband impatiently. 'Nonsense ! Keep it safely for him ; he'll take precious good care to send after it.'

‘And if he does not send for it?’

‘When once these unsettled times are over, we can easily find out where he is staying, and then we will send it to him.’

‘But, Pepe, if we were to die before then?’

‘Well, it would be a very strange thing if we were all three to die before these troubles are over. However, just on the chance of it, give me pen, ink, and paper.’

And Don José wrote on a sheet of paper the following words :

‘These ten ounces of gold belong to Don Leopoldo Ardaz, lieutenant in his Majesty’s regiment, in the year 1823, and are to be given up to him.’

He folded up the paper, and wrapped it carefully with the ten ounces in another sheet, sealed it with three wafers, and wrote on it ‘In Trust.’

Then he gave it to his wife to keep in the cedar-wood chest, in which the household treasures were reverently guarded, among which were included the black dresscoat and Don José’s diploma and license as schoolmaster. He was just about to continue reading the letter when footsteps were heard on the stairs, and when all three hurried into the little anteroom they saw to their surprise, in the parade-yard, a French colonel, who was commandant of the garrison, with some soldiers and an interpreter.

The colonel ordered a sentry to be placed at

the foot of the staircase, and then said, in a loud voice :

‘Monsieur Joseph Mentor, *maître d’école* !’

We will not attempt to describe the terror and alarm, for the reader will easily be able to imagine it, which seized these worthy people, who had spent their peaceful existence in this castle, that stood like a stone tomb in this lively town ; forgotten, petrified, as foreign and inaccessible to the seething of the world and the noise of life as a rock amid the foaming of the sea and the roar of the waves, which can never move it from the spot.

‘Did I not always tell you that this harebrained fellow would bring us all into trouble ?’ exclaimed Don José, alarmed. ‘I call that escaping from Herod to fall into Pilate’s hands ! The Lord’s will be done ! Your worship’s servant,’ he added, turning to the colonel, and making the most grotesque bow that human eyes ever beheld.

‘You have an escaped prisoner hidden here,’ said the colonel.

Don José replied :

‘Sir, a person came here whom I did not know ; the proof of which is that he climbed in through the window at night, and that without first asking my permission. The man wanted a place of shelter and I granted it him ; for I do not think we are forbidden to help the unfortunate, either by divine

or human laws. So he has been here in my house, but he is here no longer.'

The colonel gave orders for the castle to be searched; but no one was found.

'You helped him in his flight,' said the colonel; 'therefore you are his accomplice.'

'Accomplice! how is that?' asked Don José.

'You aided him in his attempt. He was a spy.'

'What, sir? No, that is impossible. He wrote to no one and saw no one.'

'At any rate he was in communication with some one, and some friend informed him that he was recognised yesterday evening, and he also gave him the means of flight.'

'I know nothing about that.'

'But, at any rate, you know who this friend is?'

Don José was silent a moment, while fear and love of truth waged furious war within him. Then he answered :

'I know him ; but, as sure as I am an honest man, only by sight.'

'Who is it?' asked the colonel.

Don José passed his finger round his neck, and answered resolutely :

'That I will not say, even if I should lose this.'

His wife and sister rushed upon him in alarm, as though they already saw this beloved head in danger.

'*O le sot !*' exclaimed the colonel.

'What does he say?' asked the sister.

'He says "so-o,"* as he probably thinks I mean to fly,' replied her brother. 'No, sir,' he continued, with increasing determination, 'I have no thought of flight. I cannot and will not run away. Here I stand; you are the knife, I am the block; do what you will with the unfortunate man who, all his life long, has never had anything to do with law. But that another should perish through my fault—that José Mentor should become an informer—no, that shall never be! Not if the king himself, whom God save, were to command it.'

'Then you will be locked up,' said the colonel, wishing to alarm him.

'I am ready,' exclaimed Don José, with the courage of despair, and pointing his arm heroically to the staircase.

His wife and sister fell round his neck, weeping bitterly.

'Has the fugitive intrusted you with any papers?' asked the colonel.

'No.'

'Search the gentleman,' commanded the colonel.

The order was immediately executed, and Leopoldo's letter was found in the pocket into which its owner had put it.

'You see,' said the colonel, 'this letter is ad-

* The Spanish 'wo-oh.'

dressed to you, and it must be from your prisoner.'

'That is true,' replied Don José.

'Then you have deceived me.'

'I deceive!' exclaimed Don José indignantly. 'No, sir, I never deceive. This letter is *my* property, is written to me, and is not a paper belonging to him whom you seek; still less was it intrusted to my charge. Does your worship understand me?'

Scarcely had the colonel begun to read the letter when, notwithstanding the judicial character he had assumed, he burst into irresistible laughter, and the tragedy became a farce. Don José's innocence was so unequivocally established by this letter, which stated the position of matters so clearly, that the colonel apologised as he gave him back the letter; then he bowed slightly, and departed.

Scarcely had he gone when Don José seized his wife by one hand and his sister by the other, and drew them hastily into the sitting-room.

'Do you see it all now?' asked he, with as much brightness and vivacity as was possible to his tranquil disposition.

His wife and sister looked at him in astonishment, and answered,

'No; what is it?'

'It is this,' replied Don José enthusiastically—

‘it is this, that this Don Leopoldo is a worthy fellow, if ever there was one—prudent in spite of his years, a man of honour, a true friend, with a powerful understanding, and a good and noble heart,’ he continued, in a faltering voice, striking his chest. ‘This letter, this letter,’ repeated he, tapping it with the back of his hand, ‘this letter, that we looked upon as an insult—this letter has saved us; and as he knew what would happen, he wrote it solely and alone for that purpose. Is not that as clear as daylight to you?’

‘That is true, that is true!’ exclaimed the sisters-in-law, with joyous surprise.

‘There, you may see that the poor young man has some sense,’ added Doña Liberata. ‘Did I not say that he felt kindly towards us?’

‘And that he had a noble heart, dear, and a clear sensible head,’ said Doña Escolastica.

‘And do not forget,’ warned Don José, ‘to leave the kitchen-window open every night, even if it should be rather cold.’

‘Yes, and we will put a rushlight there, so that he may find his way better in the dark,’ added his wife.

FEUILLET.

BORN IN SAINT-LÔ, AUG. 11, 1812.

FEUILLET.

OCTAVE FEUILLET is one of the most finished and polished of novelists among a nation with whom finish and polish have become indispensable conditions of production. His life, so far as he has cared to reveal it to public knowledge, has been uneventful. His father was a Government official at St.-Lô. The son had a brilliant career at school and the university. On quitting the latter he embraced no profession, but continued to study, in order to fit himself for the literary career he desired to follow. It was not until he was thirty that he began to publish. He made his *début* in the pages of the *National*, with a novel written under a pseudonym, a work that attracted sufficient notice to open for him the pages of the *Revue de Deux Mondes*, in which most of his works henceforth made their first appearance. Feuillet's literary baggage is not extensive, but all is noteworthy. His works are models of a pure, refined, distinguished taste, and bear evidences of extreme care. There are no signs of enthusiasm about his books ; his imagination, his ardour, have never run away with his pen ; all is kept within due limits, chiselled, con-

densed. His novels, especially his latter ones, might almost be called sculpturesque, so careful has he been not to employ a touch, a line, that does not tell, that has not its purpose and aim clearly marked in the mind of its author. There are no lengths in Feuille's novels, no needless details; yet everything is graphic, every personage and scene alive. The whole is struck into being with sharp strong touches, quick with life. Feuille does not feel the need to elaborate every little detail. Possessed of the most delicate powers of observation, he does not abuse this faculty, but only lifts into view the essential; and by so doing his descriptions do not lose, but gain, in vitality. His characters are made to reveal themselves with consummate skill. In the rare combination of boldness, emphasis, and self-restraint lies Feuille's originality and his charm. His position in literature also gives him a special character. He stands midway between the romanticists that existed before the revolution of 1830 and the modern realists. While the latter cannot be too photographically exact, sacrificing to sordid details all romance, the former saw life through a veil, and while not untrue to Nature, were yet given to idealise. They wrote fictions in the literal sense of the term. Feuille, who had read the novels of this elder school in his youth, has been affected by the after-waves of their idealism, by their poetry, their religious sense; but on the other hand he also

sympathised with the craving for hard truth, for exactitude, for reality, that distinguishes the other. In his own writings he has blended the characteristics of these two seemingly antagonistic schools ; hence his merits, and hence also occasionally his defects. It is as difficult to mingle fire and water as it is to mingle the optimism of the one with the pessimism of the other. Feuillet leans to the former doctrine, but cannot close his eyes to the diffusion and potency of evil ; hence he is at times forced to employ an amiable casuistry that will not always bear critical investigation. The aim of Feuillet's novels is moral ; and though he deals at times with delicate themes, he never does so from preference, but because his love of truth and knowledge of real life do not permit him to ignore the seamy side of things. But he never dwells on disagreeable themes, and in the most difficult passages his pen remains chaste. In his earlier novels he is at times a trifle *larmoyant* and sentimental, but there is no trace of this in his later and more vigorous works.

Feuillet has distinguished himself as a writer of plays as well as a novelist. His *Proverbes et Scènes* are poetical, fantastic, and elegant productions. Several short stories, too, from his pen are of great merit, and enclose within their narrow limits the materials of more extended romances ; they are full of thought, full of suggestive glimpses into the

depths of the human heart. For fearless diagnosis of the soul, for delicate subtle analysis of feelings, Feuillet has few equals.

L'Histoire de Sibylle was one of the earliest of his longer works. It is a religious romance, the story of a young girl who becomes a believer after a fierce wrestle with the demon of doubt. Hardly is her faith firmly established when she falls in love with a sceptic, and on account of his opinions renounces his love, after having tried in vain to convert him. Finally she dies, and he becomes converted in the end. The interest of the story centres in the psychological processes. *Le Roman d'un jeune Homme pauvre* is the most universally popular of Feuillet's novels. It has been translated various times into English, and is the typical French novel for family reading. Nevertheless, or perhaps just on this account, it is not his best, though a graceful readable romance. It is almost too tender, too delicate; the author is nervously fearful of shocking his readers by dwelling too long or too strongly upon the ugly sordid realities of poverty. This elegant work was followed by two more vigorous and passionate, which confuted those who deemed that Feuillet could not rise above the boudoir atmosphere. In *Julia de Trécœur* and *Monsieur de Camors*, Feuillet has created two works of enduring worth. It is not easy to determine which of the two books is the more remark-

able. Emile de Montegut, one of the subtlest French critics, has said of the one, '*Monsieur de Camors* will ever remain the truest picture that can be drawn of those existences wholly devoted to the demon of this world, so brilliant in appearance, whose culpable triumphs are followed by expiations so bitter and fearful.' A ticklish theme, it is handled with a delicacy combined with intrepidity that could probably have been achieved only by a Frenchman. In *Monsieur de Camors* we have a picture of Parisian life, with its lights, its deep shades, its social rottenness; a vivid narrative, full of profound truths rarely presented to view, imbued with a deep moral. Camors is a typical Frenchman of the Second Empire, born for great things, but who voluntarily shuts his soul to good influences and to the voice of Nature. He desires to be above human weaknesses, and therefore in the end sinks below them. It is a powerful, pathetic story, unchecked in its progress with reflections, but moving onwards towards the inevitable steadily, surely. Beginning softly, it gradually moves more rapidly; but not until the last is there any precipitation of events; then crime succeeds to sin, and retribution follows in their wake. As in life, so in this novel, the avenging Nemesis bides her time. Feuillet has made his aim quite clear to himself in writing this powerful story. In a prelude he says:

'Confidences entirely trustworthy have guided

us in the course of this narrative. That part of the public which attaches a passionate interest to the dramatic mysteries of a brilliant Parisian existence may read these pages with confidence. They will find in them the truth itself concerning the character and the destiny of a man who seems to us to be one of the most expressive types of his time and his country. To say that a villain is born a villain, a courtesan a courtesan, is a sad and idle word, which we hear and read each day. Were a man responsible for his acts to a court of justice only, this would be very well ; but so long as humanity has not given itself up entirely to this ennobling and salutary belief, we must try to persuade ourselves and others that there are no fatalities of birth. This is at least encouraging to those fathers who take pains to educate their children, and to those good souls who devote themselves to popular education. For our part, we believe that the hero of this book was born to be an honest man, or the opposite, or something between the two, according to the direction which his natural preceptors had given to his inclinations and faculties ; according to the moral *milieu*, to whose influence he was subjected ; and finally, according to the use which he himself made of his free and intelligent will.'

It is 'a soul's tragedy' that is unrolled before us. Monsieur de Camors adopted, with deliberation, bad principles of action ; he did evil coldly ;

he was never carried away by feeling ; but in the end outraged feelings avenge themselves. Brought up to disbelieve in all principles by a father who was worldly to the last extreme, and depraved to the core, Monsieur de Camors deliberately finished the task of corrupting a naturally noble nature. He looked upon the human herd as but a product of material forces, producing at haphazard strong and weak beings. His self-formulated creed was to preserve honour (according to the social interpretation of the term), and thus keep alive self-esteem. He developed in all their strength the physical and intellectual gifts he possessed, and made himself the type of a polished cultured man, who charmed women and controlled men. He revelled in all the joys of the intellect and the senses, and subdued as servile instincts all natural sentiments, scorned as hypocrisies all vulgar beliefs. In the outset of his career he resolved to love nothing, fear nothing, respect nothing, save honour. With this programme and these redoubtable weapons, he stepped out into life. And yet in this hero, who thus coldly outrages all humanity, we never lose our interest. This man of the world remains as attractive to the reader as he was to his surroundings up to the very end, when, notwithstanding all his shortcomings, we even cannot refuse him our sympathy. To have achieved this is to have achieved a masterpiece ; less skilfully handled

a hero like Camors would be simply intolerable, revolting.

On one occasion in *Monsieur de Camors* Feuillet stays the progress of his story to address a few words to his readers—words that throw light upon his literary aims and endeavours. He prays them not to be shocked if truth, such as they elbow each day in the world, appears to them in his pages rather crude, although softened in tone. ‘It is needful,’ he says, ‘to love truth, to veil it, but not to enervate it. The ideal itself is nothing save truth draped in the garbs of art. The novelist knows that he has not the right to calumniate his age, but he has the right to paint it, or he has no rights. As to his duty, he thinks he knows it: this duty is to maintain, in painting pictures of the most delicate nature, the severity of his judgment, and the chastity of his pen.’

How well Feuillet has fulfilled this aim is shown again in *Julia de Trécœur*. The story, of which the framework seems even more objectionable than that of *M. de Camors*, is only saved from being so by the most exquisite subtlety and delicacy of handling. The heroine is a *bizarre* headstrong girl, whom we meet at the threshold of her girlhood, the only child of a beautiful mother who is about to be married a second time. Julia, without any person’s knowledge, falls in love with her stepfather, insists upon going into a convent, but is

in the end persuaded to marry her cousin, her stepfather's friend. For a long while she refuses to meet her mother's husband, M. de Lucan ; and when she does, encounters him with a reserve that is taken for hatred, until suddenly her secret wound breaks open. Her stepfather is too noble a man to yield to her seductions ; and since she has never learnt self-command or how to abandon a desire, she determines upon suicide. Accident makes her husband and stepfather witnesses of her end, too much paralysed by sudden horror and by the knowledge of her terrible secret to save her. The story is told within limits almost too carefully defined. It should remain for ever as a study to verbose writers of the power hidden in brevity, of the mastery achieved by self-control. It is a curious psychological study ; a delicate, yet powerful, piece of workmanship. Feuillet excels in the delineation of female characters, and in this novel his talent has great scope. The different characters of the grandmother, mother, and Julia are all creations in their widely-divergent lines.

Feuillet's style is as remarkable as his composition. It is trenchant, full of sparkle and rapidity of motion, terse, tense, alive with action ; like his themes, masculine in the richest sense of the word. His language is so choice and careful that he might apply to himself the words of one of his personages, who says :

‘I have thrown myself into this extreme to avoid the tendency of the day, which seems to me trivial in excess. The horror of bad taste has driven me almost into affectation.’

Of late years Feuillet has written little. One of his latest works, *Les Amours de Philippe*, although it is no falling-off, is too much a repetition of earlier performances. In 1863 he became a member of the French Academy, and since the war has filled the post of librarian to the palace of Fontainebleau.

Julia de Trécœur.

M. de Lucan had been Clotilde’s husband some months, when the report spread abroad that Mdlle. de Trécœur, that little demon, was going to take the veil in that convent of the Faubourg St. Germain to which she had retired some time before her mother’s marriage. This report was correct. Julia had at first found it difficult to endure the discipline and observances to which the boarders of the community had also to submit ; then she was seized by a pious fervour, whose excesses it was found necessary to moderate. She had implored her mother to place no hindrances in the way of the irresistible vocation she felt for a religious life ; and it was with difficulty that Clotilde persuaded her to adjourn her decision until she had completed her sixteenth year.

Since Madame de Lucan's marriage, her relation to her daughter had been of a curious nature. She went to see her nearly every day, and was always greeted by the liveliest demonstrations of affection ; but on two points—and those of much importance—the young girl remained obdurate : she would neither consent to return to her mother's house, nor to see her mother's husband. She had even let a long time pass without making the slightest allusion to the change in Clotilde's condition, which she affected to ignore. At length one day, feeling how intolerable was the constraint imposed by this reserve, she made a resolution, and giving her mother a piercing glance, she said,

‘ Well, are you happy ? ’

‘ How should I be,’ said Clotilde, ‘ since you hate the man I love ? ’

‘ I hate no one,’ replied Julia coldly. ‘ How is he, your husband ? ’

From that time forth she regularly asked after M. de Lucan, in a tone of polite indifference ; but she never could pronounce the name of the man who occupied her father's place without hesitation and evident discomfort.

Her sixteenth year was now completed. Her mother's promise had been formal. Julia was henceforth free to follow her vocation, and she prepared herself for it with an eager impatience that greatly edified the community.

One morning Madame de Lucan was expressing to her mother and her husband the pain she suffered during these last days of respite.

‘For my part,’ said the baroness, ‘I confess that I long with all my heart for the moment that you fear. The life you have led since your marriage is simply unendurable ; but the worst of your troubles is your perpetual struggle against that child’s obstinacy. Well, when once she is a nun, there will be no more struggle, you will have a load off your mind ; and consider that you will not really be more separated than you are already, since the house is not a closed one. For my part I should be just as well pleased if it were ; however, it is not. And then, why should you oppose a vocation, which appears to me as nothing less than providential ? Even for the child’s own sake, you ought to rejoice in the resolution she has formed. I appeal to your husband. My dear sir, I ask you what might be expected of a nature like hers once let loose on the world. She would create a disturbance. You know what a head she has—a volcano ! And consider, my friend, that at present she is a veritable odalisk. You have not seen her for a long time ; you have no idea how she has developed. I have that treat twice a week, and I assure you that she is a real odalisk, with the beauty of a goddess. And then, what a figure she has ! Everything looks well on her. You might

throw a curtain on to her with a pitchfork, and she would look as if she just came from Worth's. You may ask Pierre what he thinks of her, he is honoured by her favour.'

M. de Moras, who entered at this moment, did indeed share with a very small number of family friends the privilege of sometimes accompanying Clotilde to Julia's convent.

'Well, Pierre,' began the baroness, 'we were just speaking of Julia, and I was saying to my daughter and my son-in-law that it is really most fortunate that she wishes to become a saint, since otherwise she would have set Paris in a blaze.'

'Why?' asked the count.

'Because she is as beautiful as sin.'

'Certainly, she is handsome,' said the count, somewhat coldly.

The baroness went out to do commissions with Clotilde, and M. de Moras remained alone with Lucan.

'It seems to me,' said he, 'that they are all very hard on this poor Julia.'

'How so?'

'Her grandmother speaks of her as a perverse creature. And after all, what do they reproach her with? Her reverence for her father's memory. It may be extreme, granted; but, as far as I know, filial piety is no vice, even if exaggerated. Her sentiments are overstrained; what matter, so long

as they are generous? Is that any reason for devoting her to the infernal gods, and plunging her into a dungeon?’

‘Indeed, my friend, I do not understand you,’ said Lucan. ‘What is the matter with you? With whom are you angry? You know, surely, that it is by her own desire that Julia takes the vows; that her mother is in despair; and that she has neglected no means of dissuasion. For my part, I have no reason to love her; she has caused me much sorrow, and still does so: but you know well enough that I was ready to receive her as my daughter, had she condescended to return to us.’

‘O, I blame neither her mother nor you, be sure of that: it is the baroness who annoys me. She is absurd! She is unnatural! After all, Julia is her granddaughter; and she exults, actually exults, at the thought of seeing her a nun.’

‘On my honour, I assure you that I could almost exult myself. The present state of things is unendurable for Clotilde; it must have an end; and as I can see no other possible way—’

‘But excuse me, there is another way.’

‘Which?’

‘You might find a husband for her.’

‘Excellent! How probable that is! Whom?’

The count approached Lucan, looked straight at him, and said, with an embarrassed smile,

‘Me.’

‘Say that again,’ said Lucan.

‘My dear fellow,’ said the count, ‘you see how I am blushing ; spare me. For a long time I have been wishing to put this delicate question to you, but lacked courage. Since I have found it at last, do not deprive me of it.’

‘My dear friend,’ said Lucan, ‘pray leave me time to recover, for I am quite overcome with surprise. What ! you are in love with Julia ?’

‘Deeply, my friend.’

‘No, there must be something else behind. You have discovered this means of reconciling her to us ; you wish to sacrifice yourself for the peace of the family.’

‘I assure you that I am not thinking at all about the peace of the family. I am thinking of my own, which is very much disturbed ; for I love that child with a strength of feeling that I never knew before. If I do not marry her, I shall never be consoled all my life.’

‘What ! is it as bad as all that ?’ said Lucan amazed.

‘My dear friend, it is terrible,’ replied M. de Moras. ‘I am entirely captivated. When she looks at me, when I take her hand, when her dress touches me, I feel philters flowing in my veins. I had heard this sort of agitation spoken of, but had never experienced it. I confess that it causes me delight, but at the same time despair ; for I cannot

conceal from myself that this passion will be unfortunate, and I shall carry about my sorrow as long as my heart beats.'

'What a strange occurrence!' said Lucan, who had resumed his grave manner. 'It is very serious, very annoying.'

He made a few steps across the room, absorbed in what appeared to be sombre reflections.

'Does Julia know of your feelings?' asked he suddenly.

'Most assuredly, no. I should not have ventured to tell her without first informing you. Will you do me the kindness of speaking to her mother?'

'Certainly—yes—willingly,' said Lucan, with a touch of hesitation which did not escape his friend's notice.

'You think it is of no use, do you not?' asked the count, with a forced smile.

'Of no use—why not?'

'In the first place, it is very late.'

'It is rather late, no doubt. Julia is already far committed; but I have always been a little suspicious about her vocation. Besides, in people of such excitable imagination, the sincerest desires of one day often become hateful the next.'

'But you doubt—whether she likes me?'

'Why should she not like you? You are more than good-looking—you are thirty-two years old;

she is sixteen. You are a little richer than she is. All that is as it should be.'

'Then why do you hesitate to help me?'

'I do not hesitate to help you; only I see you are very much in love. You are not accustomed to it; and I fear that a condition so new to you is urging you rather too fast to so important a decision as marriage. A wife is not a mistress. In short, before taking an irrevocable step, I would beg of you to reflect once more.'

'My friend,' said the count, 'I will not. I most sincerely believe that I cannot. You know my opinions. True passions give the decision; and I am not even sure that honour would be a sufficient argument against them. And besides, Lucan, what is there so unreasonable in marrying a woman I love? I cannot see that it is absolutely necessary not to love one's wife. In short, may I count upon you?'

'Absolutely,' said Lucan, taking his hand. 'I have made my objections, now I am quite at your service. I will speak to Clotilde at once. She is going to see her daughter this afternoon. Come and dine with us to-day; but summon up all your firmness, for success is very uncertain.'

It was not difficult for M. de Lucan to win over Clotilde to M. de Moras' side. After she had listened to him, not without several surprised interruptions, she said,

‘ Ah, it would be ideal ! This marriage would not only put an end to plans that are breaking my heart, but it combines all the conditions of happiness that I could have dreamt of for my daughter ; and besides, your friendship for Pierre would, quite naturally, bring about an intimacy between his wife and you. All that would be only too fortunate ; but how can we hope for so complete and sudden a change in Julia’s ideas ? She will not even let me finish my message.’

She set out, trembling with anxiety. She found Julia alone in her room, trying on her novice’s dress before the glass. The nun’s cape and veil, which were to hide her rich hair, lay on the bed. She was simply dressed in a long tunic of white wool, whose folds she was arranging. She blushed when she saw her mother enter, and then said, laughing,

‘ Cymodocea in the circus, am I not, mother ?’

Clotilde did not answer. She had folded her hands in an attitude of supplication, and looked at her tearfully. Julia was touched by this silent grief ; two tears dropped from her eyes, and she threw her arms round her mother’s neck ; then, forcing her into a seat, said,

‘ What would you have ? I am also a little sorry at heart, for I did love life ; but, besides my vocation, which is a true one, I am obeying a real necessity. There is no other existence possible for

me but this, I know quite well. It is my fault. I have been a little mad. I ought not to have left you in the first instance ; or, at any rate, I should have returned to you directly after your marriage. Now, after months, years, is it still possible, I ask you? Besides, I should die of shame. Can you imagine me before your husband? What expression should I assume? Then he must hate me; he has got accustomed to it. For my part, who knows whether seeing him again in that house—Besides, in every way, I should be a terrible constraint to you !

‘But, my dear little daughter,’ said Clotilde, ‘nobody hates you. You would be received like the Prodigal Son, with transports of delight. If it would be too great an effort to return to my house, if you fear to find annoyance yourself, or to cause it to others—God knows how mistaken you are—but still, if you do fear it, is that any reason for you to bury yourself alive and break my heart? Could you not return to the world without returning to me, and without facing all these annoyances that alarm you? There would be a very simple means, you know.’

‘What,’ said Julia calmly, ‘to marry?’

‘Certainly,’ said Clotilde, gently bowing her head and lowering her voice.

‘But, my dear mother, what probability is there of such a thing? Even if I wished it—and I am

far from doing so—I know no one, no one knows me.'

'There is some one,' said Clotilde, with increasing timidity,—'some one you know very well, and who adores you.'

Julia opened her eyes wide, with a surprised and pensive expression, and after a short pause for reflection, said,

'Pierre?'

'Yes,' muttered Clotilde, pale with anxiety.

Julia's brows contracted slightly. She raised her charming head, and remained for some moments with her eyes fixed on the ceiling; then, with a slight shrug of the shoulders,

'Why not?' said she seriously. 'He will do as well as another.'

Clotilde gave a little cry, and, seizing both her daughter's hands, exclaimed,

'You are willing—you are really willing! It is true! You will allow me to take him this answer?'

'Yes; but change the wording of it,' said Julia, laughing.

'O my dear, dear darling!' exclaimed Clotilde, as she covered Julia's hands with kisses; 'but tell me once more that it is really true, that to-morrow you will not have changed your mind.'

'No!' said Julia firmly, with her grave and musical voice.

She considered a moment, and then continued,
'So he really loves me, that great boy?'

'Like a madman.'

'Poor man! And he is awaiting the answer?'

'In fear and trembling.'

'Well, then, go and calm him. We will continue the conversation to-morrow. I must arrange my ideas a little, after such an upset; but rest satisfied, my resolution is taken.'

When Madame de Lucan returned home, Pierre de Moras was awaiting her in the drawing-room. He turned pale when he saw her.

'Pierre,' exclaimed she breathlessly, 'kiss me; you are my son! Respectfully, if you please, respectfully,' added she, laughing, as he lifted her up and pressed her to his heart.

He repeated the performance afterwards with the Baroness de Pers, who had been hastily summoned.

'My dear friend,' said she, 'I am delighted—delighted; but you are suffocating me! Yes, yes, it is all very well, my boy; but you are literally suffocating me! Reserve your forces. That dear little girl; it is charming of her, quite charming! At bottom she has a golden heart. And she has good taste; for you are very handsome, very handsome! However, I always did think that, when the time came for cutting her hair, she would reflect. Certainly she has beautiful hair, poor child!'

And the baroness burst into tears ; then, addressing the count in a parenthesis between her sobs,

‘ You will not be unhappy either ; she is a goddess.’

M. de Lucan, although deeply touched by this family scene, and especially by Clotilde’s joy, took this unhopcd-for event with more calmness. He was always very sparing of public manifestations, and in his heart he was troubled and sad. The future prospects of this marriage seemed to him most uncertain, and his sincere friendship for the count made him anxious. A feeling of delicate reserve towards Julia had prevented him from saying all that he thought of her character. He endeavoured to reject as unjust and partial the opinion he had formed ; but when he remembered the dreadful child he used to know, at one moment carried off by a whirlwind, at another pensive and surrounded by sombre reserve ; when he imagined her as she had been described to him since then—taller, more beautiful, ascetic—and then saw her suddenly throw her veil to the winds like one of the fantastic nuns in *Robert le Diable*, and return to the world with light step : then, in spite of himself, out of these various impressions he composed a chimera and sphinx that it seemed very difficult to combine with the idea of domestic happiness.

During the whole evening the family conversa-

tion turned upon the complications that might arise from this marriage, and the means of avoiding them. M. de Lucan entered into these details with a very good grace, and declared that he would be most happy to agree to any arrangements that his stepdaughter might desire. This precaution was not useless.

Clotilde went to the convent early next morning. Julia, after listening with somewhat ironical indifference to her mother's account of the delight and joy of her intended, assumed a more serious air :

‘And your husband,’ said she ; ‘what does he think?’

‘He is delighted, as we all are.’

‘I am going to ask you a strange question. Does he mean to be present at our wedding?’

‘Just as you please.’

‘Listen, my dear little mother—don’t make yourself miserable beforehand. I feel sure that some day or other this marriage will help to unite us all ; but leave me time to accustom myself to this idea. Grant me some months for the old Julia to be forgotten, and to forget her myself. You will agree to that, will you not?’

‘Whatever you wish,’ said Clotilde, sighing.

‘I beg of you. Tell him that I beg of him also.’

‘I will tell him ; but do you know that Pierre is here?’

‘Ah, indeed! But where?’

‘I have left him in the garden.’

‘In the garden?—what imprudence, mother! Why, these ladies will tear him to pieces like Orpheus; for you may fancy he is not in the odour of sanctity here.’

M. de Moras was summoned. Julia began to laugh when he appeared, and this facilitated his entrance. During their interview she had several attacks of that nervous laugh which is so useful to women in difficult circumstances. Not having this resource, M. de Moras contented himself with timidly kissing his cousin’s beautiful hands; but his handsome masculine features were radiant with delight, and his large blue eyes were moist with happy tenderness. It seems that he made a favourable impression.

‘I never before regarded him from that point of view,’ said Julia to her mother. ‘He is really handsome—a splendid husband!’

The wedding took place three months after. It was quite quiet, without any show. The Count de Moras and his young wife departed for Italy the same evening.

M. de Lucan had left Paris two or three weeks before, and had taken up his abode in the heart of Normandy, in an old family house, where Clotilde hastened to join him immediately after Julia’s departure.

Julia de Trécœur.

They both left the castle, carrying with them their guns, so that they might be supposed to have gone, as they often did, to shoot sea-gulls. As they were about to choose their direction, M. de Moras consulted Lucan by a look.

‘I see no danger,’ said Lucan, ‘except near the cliffs. Some words that she let drop yesterday make me fear that the danger is there; but with her horse she is obliged to make a long round; and if we cross the woods we can be there before her.’

They entered the forest on the west of the castle, and walked quickly and silently. This path led them straight to the cliffs they had visited the day before. On this side the woods projected in an irregular point, and its last trees almost touched the edge of the cliff. As they neared the edge, feverishly hastening their steps, Lucan suddenly stopped.

‘Listen!’ said he.

The sound of a horse’s gallop was distinctly heard upon the hard ground. They began to run.

A slight talus separated the wood from the cliffs. They had half descended it, catching hold of the hanging branches, themselves hidden by the bushes and foliage, when a striking spectacle met their eyes. A little on their left Julia

was arriving after a frantic ride. She crossed the oblique line of the woods, and seemed to be making straight for the edge of the cliff. At first they thought the horse had run away, but soon they saw that she was whipping its sides to increase its pace. She was then about a hundred steps from the two men, and she had to pass before them.

Lucan sprang forward to throw himself on to the other side of the talus, when M. de Moras' hand was laid heavily on his arm and stayed him.

They looked at each other. Lucan was stupefied at seeing the great change which had suddenly contracted the count's face and furrowed his eyes; at the same instant he read in his fixed gaze intense sorrow and inexorable resolution. He understood that there was no longer any secret between them. He obeyed this glance, which he felt had for him only an expression of confidence and of friendly supplication. His own contracted hand seized his friend's, and remained motionless.

The horse passed them at a few paces' distance, its breast white with spume; while Julia—beautiful, graceful, and charming even in this terrible moment—rose lightly in the saddle.

Some feet from the fissure in the cliff, the horse, divining an abyss, turned round suddenly and traced a semicircle. She brought it back to the plateau, retreated a space, and, urging it with whip and voice, drove it once more towards the

terrible precipice. When the animal again refused to encounter this formidable obstacle, the young woman—with her hair loosened, her eyes flashing, her nostrils dilated—turned it round, and gradually made it back towards the edge of the cliff. The horse—steaming, prancing—rose almost upright, and stood out in its full height against the gray morning sky.

Lucan felt M. de Moras' nails enter his flesh.

At last the horse was conquered. Its two hind-feet left the earth, and met space. It fell over ; its fore-feet beat the air convulsively.

The next moment the cliff was void. Not a sound had been heard. In the deep abyss the fall and the death had been silent.

KRASZEWSKI.

BORN IN WARSAW, JULY 26, 1812 ; NOW LIVING IN
DRESDEN.

KRASZEWSKI.

KRASZEWSKI is the first of contemporary Polish novelists in the estimation of his compatriots. He is a notable member of that brilliant coterie of Polish writers who arose towards 1828 in the wake of Mickiewicz, Slowacki, and Krasinski, and who, like their forerunners, made it their aim to arouse a love for, and interest in, their country. Kraszewski was born at Warsaw, and educated at Wilna. His studies completed, he settled on his estate in the province of Volhynia, and devoted himself entirely to literature. He has by no means confined his energy to novel-writing, but wandered over various fields, winning spurs in all. Poetry, drama, philosophy, history, criticism, philology, are among the various departments he has touched. Journalism also attracted him; it gave him scope to ventilate the grievances of his countrymen, to vindicate their claims to European attention, to arouse interest among his own nation in literature and art. In 1859 he even became editor of a daily paper—a post he retained until 1864, when he left Poland to live in Dresden.

Kraszewski is a totally new apparition among his countrymen. Their fictitious literature had, up to his time, been entirely founded upon imitations of romantic French novels, rendered yet more romantic and more wildly impossible by their transplantation into a foreign soil. There was no reality in the life they depicted ; they reproduced, bluntly, blindly, what they had read in such fashion, according to Kraszewski's own dictum, 'as are reproduced on pocket-handkerchiefs the works of the great masters.' Kraszewski rose above these tendencies. It was he who first looked at home for subjects, for inspirations, and thus became the Polish novelist *par excellence*. He took his themes from Polish family and national life ; he mirrored forth faithfully their excellences, but also their defects. The moral and social conflicts that agitate his nation are scrupulously reproduced in his pages. A sincere and ardent patriot, he is not blind to the serious and deep-rooted faults of his countrymen, and he shows them with relentless vigour how these sap their vitality, their possibility of national existence. He is not afraid to tell them unpalatable truths ; and while encouraging the aspirations of young Poland, he points out its dangers with a warning voice. But beside the present, Kraszewski loves to paint the Polish past, to keep alive the traditions of the country. Above all, he loves to depict the time of Stanislaus Augustus and the

Elector of Saxony. *Morituri*, one of his longest and most noteworthy novels, is founded on events occurring in the reign of the former monarch. The scene is laid at Warsaw, and presents vivid pictures of contemporary society. The story deals with the decline of a princely family, of which it furnishes a fine description. Of late years, indeed, Kraszewski has devoted himself almost wholly to historical romances, and on this domain it is claimed for him that he resembles the elder Dumas. The comparison, however, scarcely holds. He has not the fire, the wonderful imagination, of the Frenchman, and, on the other hand, he is more historically correct. At the present time this veteran novelist has undertaken a vast task, much resembling in character Freytag's cycle of *Die Ahnen*. He too wishes to present to his countrymen, in novelistic form, a series of romances, of which the various subjects are to be derived from successive epochs of Polish history. Excellent and accurate though these historical romances are, they are not as good as Kraszewski's earlier writings. The scenes of many of these are laid amid the forests and villages of Lithuania, whose people have preserved uncontaminated the best traditions of the Poles, and among whom patriarchal customs still linger.

Since he has lived at Dresden Kraszewski has issued, under the pseudonym of Boleslawita, no-

velettes describing the latest phase of the Polish revolution and the rising of 1863, bringing into prominence, with much force, the inherent and national differences between Russians and Poles. Indeed, occasionally this is done in too polemical a fashion, considering the framework wherein it is introduced. He points out the various and characteristic tendencies of the modern Pole, how he is frivolous, flighty, narrow-visioned, sincerely, but often foolishly, patriotic. He introduces his readers to secret conspirators, to prisons, to flight, to the pains of exile; in short, he runs through the whole gamut of national misfortune. The burning Jewish question of Poland is also ventilated in his pages—a burning question truly in this country, where the numerical proportion of the Jews makes them of great moment amid a population whose language they rarely learn, and to whom they hence must remain eternal strangers.

The importance of Kraszewski as a national novelist is indubitably great. From the artistic point of view he is by no means without serious faults. His composition is loose; there is a want of dramatic power in his tales, which rather resemble verbal narration, and thus bear an Oriental impress. There is a feeling, in reading him, that he is appealing to a people who have much time to spare, who do not weary of details, and are not impatient when the same incident is retold by dif-

ferent personages. Indeed, this oral character is a recognised feature in Polish imaginative literature, and novels are called by a name that corresponds to recitation. There is a certain uniformity in his style, his dialogue lacks spirit ; he also repeats himself too much, the same scenes and situations recur too often. This fault, however, is probably due to the enormous fecundity into which a great facility has betrayed him. Nevertheless, for all his faults, he is an interesting writer, if only for the strange and unaccustomed environment into which he leads us. Nor is this his only merit. He draws characters forcibly ; he has a wide sympathy with the weak, uncertain, human heart ; he has an eye for the picturesque, the characteristic, the true. The regard entertained for him by his own countrymen was amply attested a short time ago, when the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of his literary *début* was made quite a national festival.

The story from which we quote is one of his most popular folk-tales, *Jermola the Potter*. The scene of action is in a remote hamlet of Volhynia. Within the narrow framework of the story are introduced the various elements that form Polish society—the nobleman, the husbandman, and the Jew ; and as a social photograph of Polish life, it has been universally praised by those best fitted to judge. The hero of the story, an old man, finds, like Silas Marner, a child laid at his doorstep ; and,

as with his English analogue, whom he in some degree resembles, except in the matter of avarice, the child becomes the centre of his thoughts and interests.

The Foundling.

Old Jermola walked slowly towards his tumble-down dwelling, his head full of the revived remembrances of his life.

It was neither a cottage nor a farm, rather a ruin, an old forsaken tavern, for some reason fallen into decay. Jermola was accustomed to this melancholy abode; he approached it without repugnance, turned the handle, and opened the door. Darkness already prevailed there; he struck a light, and kindled a few shavings that lay ready in the stove.

When the old man had kindled the shavings in the stove, for a light was regarded as an extravagant luxury, he cast a glance around to see whether everything was in order; took a pot, in which to warm his supper, which the old Cossack's wife had brought him from the village, or which he himself had cooked well or badly; seated himself on a stool by the fire, and began to say the Lord's Prayer. The wind rustled in the branches of the pines and oaks in the garden, otherwise there was silence around. Jermola had become absorbed in thought over his prayer, when the silence was broken by

the crying of a child, at first soft, and gradually becoming louder and louder. It was the voice of a whining infant, and was as near as though it were behind the door.

‘What may that be?’ said the old man to himself, interrupting his prayer and rising from his seat. ‘So late at night? It cannot be a silly woman, who is going on to the rafts now with her child, or coming to me for medicine?’

He listened ; but the whining neither approached nor retreated. Then the child must be lying close by. At this hour, on such a cold evening, surely no one could have put a cradle there. And the child’s cry is so piteous.

‘It must be an owl,’ said the old man, returning to his seat ; ‘it is screeching up in an oak-tree, and yet I could swear that it is a child’s voice. I call that a wonderful imitation.’

He listened again ; the crying became plainer and more painful.

‘No, that is not an owl ; that is really beyond my comprehension ; I must go and look ; perhaps a misfortune has happened somewhere. Whatever can it be?’

With these words he sprang up quickly, drew his cap over his ears, took his stick in his hand, and, forgetting even his beloved pipe, ran out of the door. On the threshold he was already convinced that there could be no doubt about its being

a poor child's whining, and not an owl's cry. The old man was quite overcome by this, and, led by the whimpering voice, he began his search, and saw, not far from the little garden, something white under an oak. His old eyes had not deceived him ; on a little moss-covered elevation lay, wrapped in white swaddling-clothes, a crying infant.

A child—a child abandoned and exposed by its parents ! The old man's brain could not take that in. He was stupefied with amazement, surprise, pity, and sorrow ; he ran hither and thither, not knowing what to do. At last he took up the child, which, in consequence probably of feeling the movement, immediately ceased crying. Like a thief with his stolen property, forgetting even his stick, old Jermola ran into his room, still repeating, 'A child ! a child ! What can it mean ?'

Suddenly the idea occurred to him that perhaps the child had only been deposited by its mother for a moment, for some reason or other, and she would be uneasy if she did not find it again. He now began to call loudly, and to knock his fingers in the Polish manner, so that the echo recalled to him his shepherd-days ; but no one answered.

'I cannot expose the poor thing to the cold any longer,' said he feelingly ; 'I will go into the cottage ; perhaps something may occur to me which will bring me on the track.'

He opened the door ; the fire was extinguished

in the stove, the room was in darkness. He quickly deposited his burden on the bed, and fanned the fire into a flame ; this time sparing no shavings. When the room was again light, the old man hastened to the crying child, and then his surprise and terror reached the highest point. This was evidently no village child ; the swaddling-clothes alone proved that. Jermola could not understand how and why a mother or a father could make up their minds to reject so small and innocent a being, the mere sight of which made him weep with pity and emotion.

In fact, from the moment when he heard the first cry, a strange feeling had come over the old man, generally so calm : he was excited, terrified, and yet new life had come to him ; he seemed twenty years younger. Filled with curiosity, he approached the mysterious creature, that Fate, taking pity on his loneliness, had granted him as a consolation, while he was seeking some tie to bind him still to the world. The child was carefully wrapped up, but in such a manner that even its wraps gave no clue to its origin. The unnatural mother or careless father had, with some remnant of care, wrapped the child in a large piece of thick white cotton, which only revealed a small part of the face, distorted by crying. Jermola looked at the child with ever-increasing excitement, and continued to wring his hands. Then suddenly the

thought occurred to him that he stood in need of good advice, that the crying baby must be hungry, and that to bear the burden so unexpectedly imposed on him was beyond his power. Like a sudden lightning-flash it was revealed to him that here was need of nurse, cradle, and motherly care, while his means would not permit him to supply all these. And then hired hands did not appear to him worthy to touch this divine gift, as this foundling child seemed to him. He considered himself the chosen father, whom Providence had destined for the poor orphan. The thought that the child might be taken from him caused him the greatest alarm.

‘No, I will give it back to no one; it is my child—my own! God has sent it me. I will not drive away the orphan.’

Quite overcome by this strange event, he was carrying the child up and down in the room, when a heavy packet fell out of the swaddling-clothes on to the ground. He almost dropped the child.

‘So it is a rich man who has cast his own flesh and blood from him, and pays to have it taken off his hands!’

The old man became thoughtful; he tried his best to understand the world that he had hitherto known so little, and there came into his heart an intuition which in one moment revealed to him the whole blackness, misery, and sorrow of life.

‘Good God!’ thought he to himself, ‘there might even be people who would take this from the orphan. No, no one shall know anything about it. I will keep the money till the child is grown up; I shall manage to rear it alone.’

He threw the gold into an old casket which stood near his bed, and in which he usually kept his few pence. Then he wrapped the child in his *oponcza* (cloak), and ran frightened and happy with it to the nearest cottage; there to take counsel with his neighbours.

There lived the wife of the Cossack Harassym, who was universally called, after her husband’s rank, the Kozaczicha. She lived there with her only daughter.

Fortunately Jermola did not meet a living creature before the Kozaczicha’s door, as he approached the cottage breathlessly with the crying child.

Only the flickering fire shining through the window showed that the mistress was at home, and the old man entered with his burden. The Kozaczicha sat on a bench near the table, leaning on her arm, lost in thought. Horpyna sat by the stove. Both were silent and sad; but a glance at Jermola, entering with the child on his arm, sufficed to rouse them and move them to a cry of astonishment.

‘What is it, old man? What is that?’ asked the mother.

‘What—what?’ exclaimed Jermola, sinking into a seat, and laying the child on his lap without taking his eyes from it. ‘Look, and see what it is; it is a child that God has given me.’

‘What! you?’

‘It is a miracle. But I do not know what to do. When I came back from the raft by the river I lighted my fire, and began my prayer, when I heard something crying under the oaks. “It is an owl,” I say to myself; “they build their nests in the old oaks.” I continue my prayer, but the whining recommences. I could not keep still; I became anxious; ran to the spot. I seek and look, and see there—I find a child. What am I to do now?’

The two women, the old and the young one, listened full of curiosity to Jermola’s words, and shook their heads in silence.

‘Some one has exposed it,’ exclaimed the old woman; ‘but who?’

‘But who could throw down a child like that?’ exclaimed the old man indignantly. ‘Is such a thing possible?’

‘O, O, we know such people,’ answered the old woman, shaking her head. ‘Much worse stories even are told of people’s wickedness. Have you never heard of the new-born baby that the unnatural mother threw into the trough to feed the pigs, so that no trace of her shame might remain?’

Old Jermola looked amazed, with his eyes wide open, at the Kozaczicha, and shrugged his shoulders. Meantime the two women knelt down by the child, to examine it more closely.

‘What a white cloth it is wrapped in!’

‘How delicate it is!’

‘It must be a gentlefolk’s child. Who of us would dare do such a thing? Besides, we have no occasion for it.’

‘And to choose just the place by your cottage!’

‘But advise me what to do,’ begged the old man.

‘Well—what you like,’ answered the Kozaczicha. ‘You can take it to the steward; he will make it over to the magistrates, and they will place it in some hospital.’

‘Place it in some hospital!’ exclaimed Jermola, trying to restrain himself. ‘You are fine counselors! And who is to see to it there, and take care of it? They might even let the poor creature starve.’

The old woman shrugged her shoulders.

‘But how will you get advice about the child?’ asked she.

‘That is just what I am asking you, my friend.’

‘What do you think?’

‘How should I know what to think? There is a mill-wheel turning in my head. On no account whatever would I cast out this child that God

Himself has given into my charge, yet I do not know whether I shall succeed in tending it ; still it does not seem to me quite impossible.'

'You must find a nurse for it. Jurek's wife would be a suitable one.'

'On no account,' exclaimed Jermola ; 'that bad woman would torture the poor little thing to death, and besides, want I know not how much money ; and as it is, my pence go one after another. If you would give it a little milk—just look how it is twisting and turning itself—perhaps it would drink ; then I could buy the milk from you.'

The Kozaczicha burst out laughing.

'What ! Do you mean to tend it, amuse it, nurse it, rock it, yourself? And then, as if that were all that had to be done ! A child is always giving one something to do. I remember the trouble I had with my oldest, my poor Tymoszek, who did not live a year ; and then with Horpyna—no peace, night or day.'

'As if I slept much or worked so very much !' answered the obstinate Jermola, whose new-found treasure was every moment becoming more precious to him. 'A few hours' sleep are more than enough for me ; and a little child like this goes on sleeping, so long as it is not hungry. I shall find time enough to sleep a little, and to see after the garden, and roast a few potatoes.'

'But what do you mean to feed it with?'

‘Well—with milk.’

‘But if it cannot drink yet? It is so tiny.’

Jermola sighed.

‘Well, what we cannot do, we learn. But give me better advice.’

The Kozaczicha took the crying baby in her arms and looked at it with pleasure; the daughter ran to fetch some new milk, and in so doing let fall a word to her neighbour, who carried it on, so that soon the neighbours, attracted by curiosity, came first singly, then in pairs, and at last in crowds, and surrounded the old man. Since the village existed, nothing similar had ever occurred, as far as the oldest inhabitant could remember; nor had they ever heard of any such thing. There was a continual talk and buzz. Every one came with good advice: the magistrate, the elders of the commune, the women and boys, each tried to talk down the other; the same thing was discussed again and again, and the majority agreed with the Kozaczicha, who recommended Jurek’s wife as the nurse. And what desperate conjectures, what bold assertions, what jokes and votes of censure, were passed on the dishonourable parents! But no one could bring forward any well-founded suspicion. No stranger had been seen in the village that evening; the streets were deserted; neither in the inn nor at the ferry had any travellers been seen. After a long discussion, the assembly broke up to go and carry the

important news abroad. Only the old Chwedko remained behind, well known as the owner of the shaggy mare. Leaning on his stick and slowly collecting his thoughts, he said to Jermola,

‘Something has occurred to me. It must be about twenty years ago since I heard of it. In Malyczek a man I knew was left a widower; his wife had just died, after giving birth to a little daughter. The poor distressed man could not find any nurse for it: he went from cottage to cottage; no one would take in the orphan; he had not even a cow to feed it with milk. Do you know what he did? With the last rouble that was left from the funeral he bought a goat, and brought up his little daughter on its milk; now she is one of the finest girls in the neighbourhood.’

Jermola sprang up in delight.

‘Come, bring me the goat!’ exclaimed he eagerly. ‘Is there a goat to be found anywhere? I will buy a goat!’

‘The landlord of the inn has a goat.’

‘This is no time to dawdle. I will go and buy it.’

He was already at the door, when the Kozaczicha and Chwedko held him back together.

‘By no means,’ exclaimed the peasant; ‘the Jew will fleece you dreadfully if he sees how much you need the goat.’

‘Let him take what he likes, so long as he gives me the goat.’

‘You will have to give him your last shirt,’ the Kozaczicha interrupted the eager old man. ‘Do you not know Schmul? He is a bloodhound; there is not another like him among the Jews. Gently, for God’s sake, tell him some lie; say you want it for breeding, or you will have to pay as dearly for it as for a cow.’

‘I will go with you,’ said Chwedko. ‘You shall see we will get the better of the Jew.’

‘But what shall we do with the child?’

‘Do not be afraid; leave it with us, no harm will come to it.’

‘Take pity on it, mother,’ said Jermola. ‘Be careful, I beg of you.’

‘What, are you going to teach me? Is it my first child? I will pour some milk into its mouth, if it is only by drops; then I will lull it to sleep. Do not distress yourself.’

‘I shall be back in a moment,’ assured Jermola; ‘but I implore you to see that no harm comes to the child!’

The old woman could not help laughing at his anxiety. Not till he left the house did he remember how long it was since he had smoked. He drew out his pipe, which he always wore in his bosom, filled it quickly, began to smoke it, and then, in spite of the darkness of the night, hastened with Chwedko to the inn, situate in the middle of the village.

It was fortunate that Jermola was accompanied by the much more cunning old Chwedko, who, accustomed to the snares and wiles of the deceiver, had learnt prudence, and grudged neither time nor words if a penny could be saved. On the road already Chwedko gave Jermola good advice; to which he did not listen, for he was completely absorbed by the idea of possessing the goat. This improvised nurse, unfortunately a favourite of Sara, the landlord's young wife, and of her eldest son, who often pulled her beard, and had to put up with many a kick, was at most worth about twelve Polish gulden. Jermola was quite prepared to pay twenty for it; to which Chwedko did not much object, since the goat was not so very old, and gave good milk. But how was the proposal to be made to Schmul? He would have fleeced them to any extent, had he known of the urgent need. It was therefore necessary to deceive the Jew, to avoid being deceived by him. They approached the inn; Chwedko became thoughtful, and begged Jermola to withdraw a little.

'Sit down near this cottage,' said he, showing him a seat. 'Wait here; I will go in first, and prepare the Jew. Do not be afraid; we shall manage it.'

Jermola took courage; trusted in Chwedko, who had so warmly espoused his cause; and seated himself on the spot indicated. He certainly needed

rest and quiet. Leaning his head on his hands, and absorbed in thought, he now, for the first time for a long while, began to consider the future.

Chwedko first went into the tap-room, but Schmul was not there ; only the goat was walking about. Opening the door of the state-room a little way, and wiping his feet, after asking permission, he stepped on to the threshold, his hat under his arm, amid many bows. He remained carefully standing on the straw-mat—for the Jew became very angry when dirt was brought into his parlour. Thus he had fulfilled all the necessary conditions for being graciously received by Schmul, and the careful Chwedko did not forget never to address him otherwise than as merchant ; for Reb Schmul declared that the tavern business interested him but little, and he only lived in the village for his own amusement.

‘Well, what does Chwedko bring?’ asked the Jew from his seat, where he was swaying to and fro, like a pendulum, over a religious book. He interrupted his pious reading for the sake of gain, for he knew that God is more indulgent than man.

‘Excuse me, sir, there is an *opportunity*.’

An *opportunity* is the expression used by the people for every unexpected occurrence—every event that gives an opportunity for drinking brandy.

‘An opportunity! Well, what sort—christening, wedding, or funeral? I hope nobody is dead. I suppose you want brandy on credit?’

‘No; I have heard something by chance, and wanted to acquaint you with it—perhaps a gain.’

‘Well, what sort of gain?’ broke in Schmul, rising and thrusting his hands in his belt as he approached.

‘The gentleman’ (this name pleased the Jew particularly) ‘must know Jermola, the old man who lives in the tumble-down inn.’

‘Why should I not know him?—a poor wretch!’

‘That is true; but he has turned up a few roubles somewhere.’

‘Well, does he want to spend them in drink?’

‘Nothing of the sort. He does not drink brandy, but has taken into his head that he wants to buy a cow—half for credit, half for ready money.’

‘A cow! What does he want a cow for?’

‘He was just going off to the town about it. I prevented him, for an idea occurred to me.’

‘To the town—always to the town!’ exclaimed the Jew, shrugging his shoulders. ‘Well, speak, Chwedko; what have you thought of?’

‘I want to persuade him that it would be better for him, instead of buying a cow on credit, to pay money down for a milk-goat; then he will get milk and in time a kid. Perhaps you would sell him your old white one?’

Schmul looked straight into Chwedko's eyes, but he fortunately did not seem in the least confused ; nor was it easy to suspect any fraud in such a proposal. The landlord merely put one question to him, destined to sound him :

‘ Is Jermola here—in the inn ?’

‘ No,’ was the quiet answer ; ‘ he has been with his neighbours ever since midday ; but, if you like, I may perhaps succeed in talking him over and bringing him here, although he is not very fond of coming to the inn. But perhaps you have no wish to sell the old goat. I only proposed it out of kindness. Why should the money go out of the village ? But if you do not care about it, I will leave him alone, and he can go to the town.’

‘ But wait a moment, do wait,’ said the Jew thoughtfully to Chwedko, who had already seized the door-handle. ‘ What will he do in the town ?’

He called Sara into the room, and she entered with the air of a spoilt child. They conversed together in their jargon ; the Jew speaking gently, his wife very sharply. Chwedko tried to guess, by their gestures and voices, how matters stood ; but did not succeed. Soon the Jewess left the room, and Schmul turned once more to Chwedko.

‘ You are a good fellow,’ said he, patting Chwedko on the shoulder. ‘ If you want brandy on trust I will credit you for a whole rouble, do you hear ? Bring Jermola to the inn ; the goat is there ; he

is sure to be pleased with it. A very good goat. How much money has he ?'

'I do not know exactly,' answered Chwedko. 'I believe he had about twenty Polish gulden, and the Kozaczicha was going to lend him something.'

The Jew shook his head silently, and sent off the peasant, who hastened to his friend. Soon after Chwedko and old Jermola entered the tap-room. The latter was trembling like an aspen-leaf, and was ashamed of the comedy he was about to perform for the sake of the goat. His first glance fell upon its grave form ; and he would certainly have betrayed himself if Schmul had noticed it, but he fortunately was consistently playing his assumed part, and had turned his back to the new-comers.

'Good-evening, sir,' said Chwedko.

'Good-evening.'

Schmul turned round and muttered something in his beard.

'Well, shall we drink a drop ?' asked Chwedko.

'I seldom drink,' answered Jermola ; 'but, for the sake of company, give us something, Marysia.'

'I hear you are going to the fair,' began Chwedko again. 'You must have something to set you up for the journey.'

'Well, what do you want at the fair?' asked Schmul. 'If you have something to sell I will buy it of you.'

'No, I have some other business.'

‘And if you have,’ exclaimed the Jew, ‘must you go off at once to the town? You are all of you so ready with the town. Do you want to buy something?’

‘I tell you what, sir,’ said Chwedko, ‘my friend wants to buy a cow. He is dull, and he wants some worry and anxiety.’

‘What do you want a cow for?’ asked the Jew.

‘Bah, it is a convenience, and may be profitable.’

‘Good God!’ exclaimed Schmul, stretching out his hands, ‘it is plain enough that you have never yet had a cow, and do not know what it means to feed a cow. You must find a cow-boy for it. Well, consider what that costs; then the creatures always come back hungry from pasture; then you must buy hay—and hay is as dear as saffron just now; you must buy chaff, and that costs 10*d.* a sack; you must buy clover, and I do not sell that for less than 40*d.*—every one pays me that. Then you must give it green-stuff and potatoes, otherwise it will grow thin. Then it may get ill and not have a calf; and, in any case, for half a year it will not give a drop of milk.’

‘But still I should have a calf and some milk.’

‘But who will take care of it?’ asked the Jew, shrugging his shoulders.

Jermola seemed convinced, and scratched his head meditatively.

‘Is not that exactly what I told you?’ said Chwedko. ‘Cattle bring nothing but worry to poor people—nothing but misery.’

‘If only I could have a calf and a little milk!’ said Jermola.

‘That is easily said,’ continued the mediator. ‘Nothing is so good for milk as a goat, I can tell you. In the first place, it does not cost much, and can live on anything—stalks, weeds, rubbish. Then it gives no trouble; and when you have drunk your fill of goat’s milk, at least you know that you have drunk something. How it smells! How healthy it is?’

‘There you spoke a true word,’ said the inn-keeper slowly. ‘I tell you there is nothing better than a goat. *We* have discovered that already; and we generally keep goats. But that is the way of people; they look on and do not imitate; they have no sense in their heads. A goat is a real treasure.’

‘Who knows, perhaps I shall turn the matter over and buy a goat,’ said Jermola slowly.

‘It is the best thing you can do!’ exclaimed Chwedko. ‘I tell you that is the most sensible plan. If Mr. Schmul would sell you his white one—’

‘What can you be thinking of?’ interrupted the Jew hastily, as though he had just caught the words. ‘I would not give up my goat for all the money in

the world. My wife, my children—they all love it ; it is an invaluable creature ; it is worth more than a cow.’

‘It is a pity,’ said Jermola, looking at the goat. ‘Why should I have to drag myself to the town ? My old legs can hardly carry me. Your goat might perhaps—’

‘It is indeed a rare goat !’ exclaimed the Jew. ‘Have you ever seen such a goat ? She is so sensible that you can talk to her ; and her milk—you hardly know what that is ! You will not find one like her twenty miles round ; it is a treasure, and not a goat ! It is a phenomenon !’

‘But old,’ remarked Jermola slowly.

‘Old ! How old ? The old goats are the best. Why, how old is she ? She is really only just beginning her life ; she will live another twenty years !’ exclaimed Schmul, becoming more and more excited.

‘And what did she cost you ?’ asked Jermola.

‘What she cost me ? That has nothing to do with the matter. As a kid, she cost me two roubles. But you must know that she is not a common goat ; she belongs to a superior kind. I would not sell her for six roubles ; she eats hardly anything, and is always fat, and has two kids every year.’

A momentary pause ensued. Jermola looked about him, and did not know what to do next ; while

he constantly cast glances at the goat, which continued to walk up and down the room, striking the ground with her hoofs, and poking her head everywhere where she perceived anything eatable. She collected remains of leaves, gnawed crusts and bits of bread. We must do her the justice to say that she trusted in no one, and cared for her own maintenance.

‘That would really be something for you,’ began the broker Chwedko: ‘she is accustomed to the village; she knows the pasture; she is experienced; not very young either; but gives very good milk.’

‘Not a common goat,’ added the Jew softly; ‘a superior kind.’

‘But what a price!’ exclaimed Jermola.

‘Well, I will tell you what,’ said the Jew, approaching hastily—‘you are a worthy man. I love and honour you; the people at the fair will fleece you. I will do something for you, and let you have the goat for three roubles. There, now do as you please.’

Chwedko, who had feared something worse, and was glad to come off so easily, added quickly,

‘Come, shake hands upon it, and thank the merchant; it is dirt-cheap. Pay him, and take it; I do not grudge it you.’

‘For my part, I am willing,’ answered the old man; ‘only you must give me a cord to lead the goat home by.’

The unexpected bargain was struck. Jermola took three roubles out of a knot in an old handkerchief, and counted them out to Schmul. The Jew examined them, spit on them as is customary, and put them in his pocket.

‘But you must bring back the cord to-morrow,’ he muttered, and folded his cloak round him, preparing to go back to the parlour.

‘And the *mohorycz*?’ asked Chwedko softly.

‘Jermola must pay that,’ said Schmul; ‘but because he did not beat me down—well, you need not pay for the brandy you have drunk; I have given you the *mohorycz*.’

Old Marysia brought a cord with a noose, which she used for carrying wood, and Chwedko closed the door and tried to catch the goat, which, suspecting treachery, constantly eluded him. The Jew had taken himself off.

‘Well, you two have made a fine bargain!’ cried the old woman, when the innkeeper was gone. ‘To pay twenty Polish gulden for an old goat; you might have got three young ones for that at the fair.’

The old men were silent, fastened the cord round the goat’s horns, and set out with their booty. Jermola trembled with joy, the tears ran down his cheeks, and he kissed his friend.

‘You have done me a great service; may God reward you for it!’ said Jermola softly.

‘But now I must not come into the Jew’s sight any more,’ sighed Chwedko, as he considered the danger to which he had exposed himself. ‘Had we let drop a word about the child the infidel would have guessed everything, and have fleeced you finely.’

Talking in low tones, they returned to the Kozaczicha’s cottage, forcing the goat, who objected to leaving the inn, to obedience by various means. But soon after their departure the storm had broken out at the tavern ; for Sara immediately acquainted her husband with the news she had just heard about the child found before Jermola’s hut. Schmul knew at once that he had been taken in, and saw how necessary the goat had been. He bit his fingers with vexation.

‘Well, take care, Chwedko, you scoundrel,’ said he, shaking his head ; ‘unless I die, I will pay you with interest !’

MARLITT.

BORN IN ARNSTADT, DEC. 5, 1825 ; STILL LIVING IN
THAT TOWN.

MARLITT.

IF novels be, indeed, as a French writer contends, the staple diet of 'les jeunes gens et les femmes,' and ought therefore to be written with a view to this public, then Marlitt must be pronounced the ideal novelist. Her works are preëminently lady-like; they in no wise offend good taste, or touch upon themes unsuitable for discussion within the drawing-room. They are, moreover, pervaded by that romantic and ideal atmosphere which is so widely remote from the actual, and which, perhaps, on that very account is so dear to the ordinary novel-reader. Especially dear when, as in this case, the novel makes no pretension to be an idyl, but claims to portray life. This is not the place to discuss whether the world, as encountered in the pages of Marlitt and her school, would be a pleasanter abode than that with which we are more familiar; it certainly induces in the novels it inspires a want of stay, of backbone, of stability, that renders their reputation merely ephemeral. Of such reputation Marlitt, however, has lacked nothing. She is, perhaps, the best-read novelist

now living in Germany. While making no pretension to philosophy, she has succeeded beyond her more ambitious brethren in riveting the attention of her readers ; her novels have penetrated farther than those of writers of more genuine power. The popular verdict, though often erroneous, has yet inherent in itself a sort of rough-and-ready justice. It is not without cause that Marlitt has become so popular. Starting with few pretensions beyond the desire to amuse, the purpose of her books is fulfilled when this is attained. Moreover, Marlitt understands the art, so commonly ignored in her country, of constructing a romance. She is not verbose ; she does not deal in digressions and reflections ; she builds up her stories with care, and develops them easily and skilfully. From the first she interests her readers, and fixes their attention, and once having obtained a hold upon them she does not allow it to relax. Her great fault is her want of variety of theme ; her talent, her imagination, are of one mood, one groove ; having read one or two of her books we have read them all. She has a certain stock-in-trade that appears and reappears constantly under very slight disguises or changes. These are principally a heroine, who is treated as a kind of Cinderella by her family, or those amid whom she lives, who has to suffer from misconstruction and neglect, and is finally raised from out of the ashes by a lover of high de-

gree. The Cinderella-story basis exists more or less in every tale. Beside this we meet with haughty aristocrats, who, as a rule, come off badly, and are depicted as knaves or fools, or both ; then there are marvellously virtuous and refined men and women of the people ; some old maiden-lady garnering in the deepest recesses of her heart a faded love-story ; a few family dissensions ; designing Catholic priests ; secularised or half-ruined convents now turned into Protestant almshouses or stately homes ; and, as a background to the whole, Thuringia, with its woods and streams. These elements, well fused and placed in different juxtapositions, might serve as a recipe for a novel *à la* Marlitt, after the manner of that wicked little book, published in Oxford some years ago, called *Every Man his own Poet*, in which are given recipes in culinary language for writing poems according to the manner of the greatest masters of our day. But as this skit is in no wise meant to detract from the real merits of the poets, so we do not mean to detract from Marlitt's merits, which are also decided, even though they cannot be classed in the first rank.

E. Marlitt is the pseudonym of Eugenie John. She was born at Arnstadt in Thuringia, the country so charmingly depicted in her pages. Her father was an artist, and it is probable that she inherited from him an eye for beauty. When she was six-

teen, the reigning Princess of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, who was struck with the richness of her soprano voice, adopted her, and caused her to be carefully trained. At this little court Marlitt probably obtained that insight into the intrigues and pettiness of such an existence as she has repeatedly portrayed. The princess ultimately sent her *protégée* to Vienna, where she was prepared to sing at concerts and on the stage. This career was suddenly cut short by a serious affection of her hearing. She had to abandon her prospects, and returned to court at the wish of her protectress. Here she remained some years, during which the desire to write grew into a fixed purpose. Already at school her attempts had attracted the notice of her masters ; and later, friends and judicious critics encouraged her to proceed with her efforts, and endeavour to turn to account her indisputable talent. This advice fell in with her own ardent desire to write, and she prepared herself carefully for a literary profession. When she thought herself sufficiently prepared, she resigned her post at the court, and returned home. In 1865 she made her literary *début* with the novelette, *The Twelve Apostles*, in the weekly family journal, *Die Gartenlaube*, probably the most widely read German paper. The work already contained every element of Marlitt's power, and was favourably received. Her first real success, however, she owed

to the longer romance of *Goldelse*, which also appeared in this periodical, as indeed has been the case with almost all Marlitt's stories. This was followed quickly by *The Old Maid's Secret*, *Archduchess Gisela*, *The Moorland Princess*, *The Second Wife*, and quite recently by *The Schillingshof*; novels which, with the exception of the last, have all been translated into English and other European tongues, and have been adapted for the stage in their own country.

It is possible that Marlitt may have been influenced by Currer Bell. *Jane Eyre* is a familiar and favourite book in Germany, and in *The Old Maid's Secret* there are touches that remind us of the greater novelist. The strong sensational element too that pervades them all may have been borrowed from England; while the briskness of action, the just perception of proportion, and the power of recognising striking situations may have been induced by Marlitt's early connection with the stage. *Goldelse* is the story of a burgher-maiden scorned by the aristocratic society into which she is thrown, and who is finally raised into their magic circle by a marriage above her station. *Archduchess Gisela* is the exact opposite. Here the aristocratic maiden, full of the prejudices of her class, is purposely reared in lower surroundings, and is finally converted from her pride of birth by love for a plebeian. *The Moorland Princess* grows up, like a

wild flower of the heath on which her childhood is spent, in the home of her grandmother. Then she too is removed to a small court, where her father holds an official post. In *The Schillingshof* we are introduced to two families—relations and neighbours—who live at enmity with one another, and who inhabit portions of an old convent. By means of a secret passage, that dates from monkish times, and connects the two houses, the family secret and cause of dissension is discovered. The story is full of plots and counterplots ; and perhaps, only from its want of novel situations, although readable, like all this author's writings, is in no wise her best work.

The fact that the writer is an invalid, and lives in strict seclusion, may have much to do with her narrow range of subject, her restricted outlook into life. Her novels, however, serve their end, that of entertaining, and continue to hold their sway over the fiction-reading public of her country.

The Twelve Apostles.

In the confused storm of contradictory thoughts surging in her brain, only one stood out clearly before her, and she clung to it as to an anchor. She must away from here—far away. It would be no use to go to another neighbouring town ; she must no longer breathe German air, nor see a German

sky above her head ; the sea must lie between him and her : she would go away—far, far away.

As though this thought lent her wings, and would no longer let her rest even here, she hastened out of the room, and mechanically entered the cloisters. Her first glance convinced her that Werner had left the garden. She ran restlessly up and down, all her thoughts fixed on the one idea : How could she obtain money for her journey ? At length she sat down, wearied out, on the pedestal where for centuries the statue of the Virgin Mary had stood. She closed her eyes and leaned against the wall, which breathed refreshing coolness on to her burning limbs. Perfect stillness reigned in the little corner, which no breath of air ventured to disturb ; even the shoots of broom did not move, but, twined round the capitals, let their ends hang loosely and freely in the air. Now and then only, when the young girl started up, or changed her position suddenly, a slight noise was heard in the wall, and each time the pedestal trembled. Magdalen was at first too much absorbed in her thoughts to notice this curious sound ; but once she struck rather more violently against a projection in the lower part of the wall, and immediately heard an ugly creaking, and felt herself violently shaken on the pedestal. That frightened her. She jumped up, and ran a little way into the garden. She soon returned. The sun was shining in with such a

warm golden light ; the swallows, whose nests were built among the green on the columns of the cloisters, were flying in and out undisturbed, and twittering merrily ; and a child's happy laugh was heard across the garden-wall. She felt ashamed of her fear, and began boldly to examine into the matter.

Above the pedestal, next to a projecting stone, was a sort of handle, round and massy, such as are even now sometimes found on locks of old doors. It had hitherto remained unnoticed, because it had been completely hidden by the statue. Magdalen's arm had struck against this handle. Suddenly the legend of the twelve silver apostles occurred to her, who had once belonged to the convent, and were said still to lie in a subterranean passage. Of course report had not failed to place as guard before the entrance black mastiffs, with flashing eyes as big as plates, while the entrance itself was supposed to vanish as soon as the unhallowed eye of a mortal beheld it. But what if the solution of the mystery lay before her ? What if it were reserved to her to raise that treasure, of whose value and greatness the legend told such incredible wonders ? What a satisfaction for her if she could scornfully throw these masses of silver before the feet of the purse-proud townspeople, and, above all, before him, keeping nothing for herself but the means that would enable her to leave the town ! But all

that was so fantastically absurd. Only an excited imagination could build such castles in the air in the midst of reality. In spite of these arguments of common sense, Magdalen grasped the handle. After several vain attempts to turn it, she pushed it back violently into the wall ; and behold, several blocks of stone, which looked as though they might any moment fall out of the wall, retreated with a loud noise, sending up a tremendous cloud of dust. A broad crack appeared in the wall, and Magdalen now saw that the stones were not nearly so thick as they appeared from outside. They were thin, and had been skilfully fastened on to an oaken door, which could now be easily opened. Just below Magdalen's feet eight or ten well-worn steps led downwards. Below there was a greenish-golden shimmer, as though the sun were shining through dense foliage. It did not look at all gruesome, and Magdalen quickly resolved to descend. When she reached the bottom, she saw before her a low narrow passage ; on the left, close to the roof, were long narrow openings, through which fresh air and dim light could enter. Doubtless the passage ran parallel with the convent-wall above ; and this, with the living wall of thick foliage, hid these holes from sight. The floor of the passage was covered with fine sand, and the mortar was as firmly fixed among the stones as if years, and not centuries, had passed over it.

Magdalen went on. The passage descended somewhat steeply ; and suddenly, to her right, appeared a second passage, which frowned on her in absolute darkness. She hastened on in alarm, always following the greenish rays of light which shone so consolingly into the chief passage. After a time these, too, ceased. Violent shaking above her led her to suppose that she was now under a frequented street, full of the noise of carriages and of foot-passengers—probably the market-place. Here the passage took a sharp turn to the right, and the lights from above once more met her sight.

Magdalen had been walking on some time ; but nowhere, neither on the walls nor the floor, were there any traces of the convent treasure. Her foot waded in the soft powdery sand, and met no other object ; and now and then in the holes above appeared a many-coloured scaly lizard ; that was all.

A few more steps, and she stood before a door, which exactly resembled the one at the entrance. Magdalen stood and hesitated. Here doubtless was the solution of the problem ; but what was it ? Suppose this unknown spot before her should breathe a miasma that would stun her instantly, and inevitably bring about her death ? She did not want to die down here ; the thought was terrible. She retreated a step ; but now everything

she had suffered to-day once more came back to her mind. Only an hour ago no price had seemed too high for the restoration of her peace of mind ; and even if she were to die down here—was that thought more terrible than the consciousness that she must now drag out an existence, perhaps a long one, joyless and sunless, with weary heart, in a hated spot ? Her pulse was beating violently. She felt as if storms were raging round her head, and beating their black wings before her eyes. She seized the handle of the door and pushed it back. A loud crash and rattle deafened her ; a ray of light, as if the sun had poured forth all its brightness here, dazzled her eyes. She made one trembling step forward, and hid her face in both hands ; while once more a thundering din was heard behind her, and the ground shook beneath her feet.

At length she raised her eyes. Where was she ? Before her lay a charming bed of flowers ; above her towered a group of beautiful lime-trees. She herself was standing on a neat gravel-walk, and the gentle murmur of a fountain struck on her ear, while its silver water shone through the bushes at a little distance.

At the first moment the whole surrounding appeared dazzling and fairy-like to the young girl, who had stepped out of the dull twilight of a narrow shaft. What wonder if the astonishing solutions of fairyland passed before her lively

fantasy. But, after one careful glance, the lofty pinions of imagination suddenly descended, and gave way to violent alarm. Good Heavens! she was standing on strange property, in the garden of some rich person! Under an airy pavilion, beyond the flower-bed, sat a charming group of young girls. They were chatting, and leaning back carelessly in their seats, holding some work in their hands; while several others were plundering a rose-bush, and, amid loud laughter, fastening the beautiful flowers in their plaits. In their light white dresses they flitted like pigeons among the bushes, and, in spite of her fright, Magdalen remained for a moment rooted to the spot, gazing at the lovely picture. Next moment she resolved to fly back into the passage. She turned round. There was no door, no opening, to be seen; but, from out his mighty beard, covered with green moss, the grave stone countenance of a saint was staring at her.

With trembling hands she felt along the wall for a handle, or some other means of finding the vanished door. She felt among the nettles at the foot of the statue, felt each stone fold of the priestly garment, and at length in despair shook the saint himself, who kept his stern eyes angrily fixed on her. In vain; her retreat was cut off, and she could not go forward without meeting the people of the house. She remembered the scene in Wer-

ner's house. Her poor clothes, not even covered by a protecting shawl, might draw on her similar humiliation. She knew that at first her story would not be believed, because it must sound so incredible; and before she should be able to prove the truth of it, how many attacks might not her proud spirit have to endure!

Once more she looked across to the young girls. They looked so sweet and harmless. They were young like herself. Perhaps if she went boldly up to them, and told them her adventure, they would believe her, and keep her till darkness came on, and give her some covering in which to cross the streets.

She walked quickly along the gravel-path which led to the pavilion; but scarcely had she reached the first flower-bed when she stood still in alarm. Through a large iron gateway just opposite her, came, in a black-silk dress, carefully protected by a white apron, over which hung an immense bunch of keys, Madame Bauer, followed by her granddaughters. All three carried trays of cups and baskets of cake. Magdalen could doubt no longer. The subterranean passage had connected two convents. She was in Werner's garden.

Her heart almost stood still with terror; but suddenly a consolatory thought occurred to her. In this house lived her good old Jacob. If she could but succeed in reaching his room she would

be safe. The windows of the high house could be seen through the branches of some chestnut-trees across a low roof, which must belong to the outhouses. She now knew which direction she must take, and turned into a narrow side-path which led through a shrubbery. After a few steps she reached a little building that touched the back wall of the house, and had large glass windows at the top. Silk curtains partly drawn hid the interior to which led several steps, on both sides of which stood pots of flowers. Perhaps this room was connected with the outhouses, or, at any rate, led to the yard. Magdalen entered quickly, and there was no one inside ; but it did not seem to have a second door.

Along that wall, which had no windows, stood benches with dark-red cushions. In the middle of the room stood a covered easel ; and on the tables lay books and papers in bright confusion. Doubtless this was Werner's studio. One moment she remained standing in amazement, and looked into the room, that the closed curtains enveloped in dim green light. Here he lived and worked ; and here too, old Jacob had said, was the picture of the Italian girl that Werner had called his future wife. If she raised an end of the covering from the easel she might, perhaps, see the features of the woman who had succeeded in conquering that proud heart. Yet no ; had they been an angel's features she could not have summoned up courage to raise that veil.

A noise behind Magdalen made her start. She turned round. On the lowest step stood an old servant, with a duster and broom in her hands, staring in astonishment, while her glances ran along the young girl like spiders.

‘Well, I never did!’ exclaimed she at length. ‘I do call that impudence, to steal into houses in broad daylight! If you want to beg, there is a hall; you ought to wait quietly there till some one comes; but to run in that cool way right into the garden—why, it is worse than the gipsies! Well, I will go and tell the mistress that.’

‘I implore you, for God’s sake, my dear woman!’ exclaimed Magdalen, in alarm.

‘Stuff! I am not a woman,’ answered the old servant crossly. ‘If you want to flatter me, you have come to the wrong person, I can tell you! You shall have your punishment!’ she continued, stamping her broom on the ground. ‘I only wish the master was here now!’

‘What do you want me for, Katharine?’ asked Werner’s voice at that moment. He turned the corner, and looked into the room with as much surprise as the maid had done before.

Magdalen stood motionless, and hid her face in both hands. Werner sprang up the steps.

‘You were going to Jacob, and lost the way, did you not?’ asked he hastily.

Magdalen was silent.

‘Nonsense! The way to old Jacob is not through the garden, Mr. Werner,’ said the old woman angrily. ‘This airy young person knows well enough why she has lost her way.’

‘I did not ask your opinion, Katharine,’ said Werner severely. ‘Now go into the house, and tell no one that you have met this young lady here; I shall speak to my aunt about it myself.’

The maid left the room without speaking.

‘Now,’ said Werner, turning to Magdalen, ‘tell me what has brought you to me.’

On no account would the young girl now have liked to relate how she had come here. She thought of the motives that had led her to descend into the passage. Besides, she felt she could not speak continuously to him without becoming violently excited. She had difficulty, as it was, in holding up her head and controlling her features. She therefore answered shortly,

‘I did not want to come to you; and I do not think that I am obliged to justify my presence here to you. You must be satisfied with the assurance that it was, indeed, a mistake that brought me here.’

‘But supposing I do not declare myself satisfied with this explanation?’

‘You are at liberty to believe what you please.’

‘What! Always ready for battle, even in the most trying situation!’

‘If you consider my situation trying, of course you will be ready to help me out of it as quickly as possible. It will be easy for you to show me a way by which I can depart unperceived.’

‘You do not want to meet the ladies out there?’
Magdalen eagerly shook her head.

‘Then I am sorry that I cannot help you. You see that this room has only one door; you must necessarily go through the garden, if you want to get to the yard. Look there,’ said he, drawing back a curtain a little way; ‘there are the ladies walking before the garden-door.’

‘Well, then, at least be so considerate as to leave me alone here till the ladies have left the garden.’

‘I cannot do that either. The lock of this door was broken this morning, so that it cannot be locked. If I left you here alone, you would not be safe from such attacks as you just had to suffer from old Katharine. There is no help for it: I must stay here to protect you.’

‘Rather will I endure ten times the wrong out there than remain here another moment!’ exclaimed Magdalen frantically, and rushed to the door.

At that moment Werner’s name was called outside.

‘What is the matter?’ exclaimed he in excitement, and opened a window.

‘It is beginning to rain,’ answered Antonia.

‘But we do not want to go up into the close rooms, and we beg you to let us stay a little while in your studio.’

‘I regret extremely, but this room has a marble floor. I should be inconsolable if the ladies were to catch cold here, and must therefore refuse my consent.’

‘To me too, dearest Egon?’ asked Antonia, in melting tones.

‘To you too, my dear Antonia.’

‘But that is really most unkind, Mr. Werner,’ said another girl’s voice; ‘we should so much have liked to see the picture of the beautiful Italian girl that Antonia has told us about.’

‘Ah, I have just discovered a charming talent for playing the spy in my cousin! Well, I will confess it, I have a beautiful Italian girl here; but I do not feel the least desire to show her to any one, for the very simple reason that I want to keep her quite to myself.’

‘Fie, how ungallant!’ all exclaimed at once, and flitted quickly past, for large drops were falling. Immediately after, the garden-gate was thrown to.

Werner turned round now, and drew Magdalen, who was just about to rush out, back into the room. A wonderful change had suddenly come over him. Where was the marble stillness of his features, the cold calm of his eyes? Grasping the young girl’s hand, he said, with trembling voice,

‘You must not leave this room until you have granted a request.’

Magdalen looked up surprised and startled. But he continued,

‘A few hours ago, you told me that you hated me; now I beg you to repeat those few words to me here.’

Magdalen hastily snatched her hand away, and stammered almost inaudibly,

‘What for?’

‘I will explain to you afterwards. Repeat it!’

The young girl rushed farther into the room in the deepest emotion. She turned her back to Werner, and wrung her hands in dumb terror. Suddenly she turned round, crossed her hands over her face, and said, in smothered tones,

‘I—I cannot!’

Then she felt two arms thrown wildly around her.

‘You cannot, and why not? Because you love me, Magdalen! Yes, you love me!’ exclaimed Werner joyfully, as he drew her hands from her face. ‘Let me see your eyes! Is that a feeling of which you need be ashamed? Look at me, and see how happy and proud I am, when I say to you, I love you, Magdalen!’

‘It is impossible! That icy coldness, which made me despair—’

‘Was meant just as your brusqueness was, which

by no means made me despair,' interrupted Werner, smiling. 'My child, your skill in dissimulation is not great. The sins your sharp bitter words committed against me were atoned for by your eyes. I loved you from the moment when I saw you on the tower. Old Jacob's tales, which I drew from him without his noticing it, revealed to me your whole inner world, and taught me that I was destined to raise a treasure which hundreds had passed by unnoticed. But I also knew that the birdcatcher who wanted to catch this rare bird must be on his guard ; for it was shy, and looked on the world with suspicious eyes. Therefore I assumed the armour of cold calm, and avoided every violent movement in my words as well as in my features. I have watched you numberless times, when you knew nothing of my presence. In the quiet old church, in the convent garden, in Jacob's room where you scorned my oranges, and in the little garden on the wall, where you threw flowers to the neighbours' children. Will you be my wife, Magdalen ?'

She raised herself in his arms with sparkling eyes, and without a word extended both hands to him. And thus was the bond formed between two human beings, of whom, but a few minutes ago, every ignorant observer would have said that they must repel one another like fire and water.

Magdalen no longer concealed from her beloved how deeply she had suffered in the last few

weeks, and told him of her underground adventure, without concealing a single thought that had passed through her soul down below.

‘Then it is the mythical twelve apostles whom I have to thank for reaching this happy goal more quickly than I had dared to hope,’ said Werner, laughing. ‘Do you remember what I wished you in our first conversation, which took such a stormy end?’

‘Yes ; that apostle—’

‘Is love.’

‘But the beautiful Italian girl, of whom Jacob said—’

‘That I should marry her?’ asked Werner, smiling. ‘Well, I will show her to you, that little Neapolitan girl, with the repulsive features and the ugly hair, which has somehow managed to twine a firm net round my heart.’

He uncovered the picture on the easel. There sat a lovely girl on the parapet of a tower window, and looked longingly and dreamily into the distance. The Neapolitan headdress lay on her rich blue-black plaits, a white-lace kerchief surrounded her neck and disappeared in a fire-coloured bodice, which fitted closely about the slender figure. The picture was still unfinished, but it promised to be a masterpiece.

‘You see my little girl, who avoids the glass, because she fears to be frightened at herself: this

is you. But I have often thrown aside my brush in disgust; for the peculiar charm that so suddenly kindled a bright light in me scorns all colours.'

A violent shower of rain now struck against the glass walls. At that moment old Jacob ran past as fast as his old legs could carry him. His white uncovered hair fluttered in the wind, and he came panting into the room.

'I wanted—' he began breathlessly.

'To see whether everything was all right, old Jacob?' broke in Werner, smiling. 'Quite right,' continued he, leading Magdalen towards the old man; 'everything, except the banns and the wedding. What do you say, Jacob; have I not chosen a beautiful bride?'

Jacob stood as still as a statue. At first he put his hand absently to his head and then smiled, like some one who is trying to share in a joke he does not understand. Magdalen approached him, and, speechless with joy and bliss, put her arm round his neck. Only then did he awaken from his stupor, and say, with tears in his eyes,

'O you wretched child, there you are! Your aunt is sitting over there and crying her eyes out. When she came home the door stood open, and you could be found nowhere in the convent. Every one is looking for you; and on your account I have, for the first time, forgotten my duty; for, in my fright and terror, I never heard the thunder-

storm, and the rain might have swamped the whole place here. But come with me at once ; your aunt imagines you, if possible, already among the Moors. But, for God's sake, tell me why you are here ?'

'I have told you already ; she is here as my bride,' said Werner emphatically.

'O Mr. Werner,' implored the old man, 'do not speak so ! This girl does not understand any joking, I have often told you so.'

'Yes, dear Jacob ; and I might almost be afraid if I were not so very much in earnest,' said Werner, laughing, as he drew the girl to his heart.

We have to learn to believe many things in this world, and so at length Jacob was brought to the delightful conviction that Werner was really going to make his beloved Lenchen Mrs. Werner. And when the aunt's unbelief, of even longer duration, evinced by shakes of the head and gestures of the hand, was at length overcome, there was a scene of joyful emotion and surprise in Jacob's little room, such as the old walls had probably never witnessed.

The subterranean passage leading to his garden has been blocked up by Werner's order. He said gaily that by this road happiness had come to him, and he must cut off its retreat for ever. In fact, he was so intoxicated by his happiness that he never thought of devoting any attention to the mysterious passage. Other explorations could not be compared with Magdalen's in point of suc-

cess ; for others found nothing where the young girl, according to her own statement, had sought silver and found gold.

Legend still crouches in the corners of the convent, and spreads her gray mantle over the mysterious twelve apostles.

BJÖRNSON.

BORN IN KVIKNE DEC. 8, 1832.

BJÖRNSON.

BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON may be said to have created a Norwegian national literature. He is a true son of this Northern land, with its grim beauty, its stern fjords, its massive fjelds; and like his native country, so is his style—strong, tense, sadly and poetically beautiful. He is a true Norseman for good and ill, both in himself and in his writings.

Björnson was born in the north of Norway, amid a desolate mountain region, where his father had a living, and where the child became familiar with all the features of out-of-door life. When he was sent to school he distinguished himself more in athletics than in studies, but finally advanced sufficiently to enter the university of Christiania, where, however, his stay was brief. He felt in him the desire to write and become the champion of Norwegian nationality; and he soon formed a connection with newspapers, for which he wrote first reviews of books, then sketches from the real life of the people. For two years he undertook the direction of the theatre at Bergen, desiring to free the stage of his country from the exclusive influence of

the Danes, who till then had chiefly filled the posts of managers and actors. At the same time he edited a political paper in which he also advocated his views. In both capacities he drew down upon himself much aspersion ; so that at last, in 1858, he withdrew from Norway for a while, and took up his abode at Copenhagen. He was also partly instigated to this by desire to see life on a larger scale. At Copenhagen he published his first three idyls of peasant-life, *Arne*, *Synnöve Solbakken*, and *A Merry Boy*, which at once established his reputation as an author. The stories, told with the simple directness that befits such tales, are redolent of their native soil, and as remarkable for psychological acumen as for vivid descriptions of folk-life. It is clear that the author paints that which he knows and loves ; there is a reality, a truth to nature, in his peasants too seldom found. Björnson writes as one of themselves, not as an outsider who studies the people as an interesting genus. Indeed he has carried this almost to a fault. His best stories and dramas paint nothing but Norway, and in Norway nothing but the peasants, whom he regards as the real representatives of the nation. His desire is to substitute the old Norse culture for the European ; he is an enemy to cosmopolitanism ; nationality is his watchword, his cry. He holds the Norwegians to be the first people in the world ; he is an optimist, a demagogue, a Republican. Indeed, his political

views have of late got him into trouble. Always vigorously upholding Republican ideas, he recently issued a poem called 'The King,' in which he denounces monarchy as a lie. The poem gave much offence ; it was regarded as a reflection upon the present King of Sweden ; and as this monarch is more than commonly enlightened for a sovereign, and is, if it be not a paradoxical statement, himself inclined to Republicanism, the supposed insult was the more resented. A storm of abuse greeted the poem, which was not modified when Björnson soon after gave further offence by some unorthodox religious expressions, and he saw himself obliged to retire to his country-seat in Gudbrandsdale where he is now living in sullen retirement, farming his lands, and threatening to emigrate, and shake the dust of Norway from his feet.

At the same time that Björnson published his first tales he also issued dramas, which dealt equally with national themes, and which he intended should be 'folk-plays.' 'What I mean by a "folk-play,"' he writes, 'is a play which should appeal to every age and every stage of culture, to each in its own way ; and at the performance of which all, for the time being, would experience the joy of fellow-feeling. The common history of a people is best available for this purpose.'

From 1860 to 1863 Björnson travelled in Italy at the expense of the state, and on his return under-

took the direction of the Christiana Theatre. He resigned this post after holding it a few years, finding that he was unsuited to conduct the technical department of his office. Since then he has lived purely for literature and politics. He has written one novel, *Magnhild*, universally acknowledged to be a failure. His reputation rests upon his dramas and his *naïve* folk-idyls. The story, *The Bridal March*, from which we take our extract, illustrates, like all this author's tales, the simple piety and stern immobility of the Norwegian peasant.

The Betrothal.

After some time they continued their way through a birch-wood, and Hans had no little trouble with the dog, who would not keep quiet. Mildrid's heart began to beat. He agreed with her that he would remain close by, but she must go on alone. He carried her over a few boggy places, and then he felt that her hand was burning hot.

'Do not think about what you are to say,' whispered he; 'only speak what just comes into your mind.'

She did not answer a single word, nor did she look up to him. Now they came out of the forest, which here consisted of tall sombre pines, under which they had walked slowly along, while he had told her softly how his great-grandfather wooed his

cousin Aslang; strange old stories which she only half-listened to, and which yet strengthened her. They left the wood behind, and stepped on across fields and meadows; and now he too became silent. Now she looked at him, and her fear was so evident and so great, that he also was overcome by a strange sensation. He could find no encouraging words, the matter concerned him too nearly. They went along, side by side; a little copse, just opposite the farm, hid them from the eyes of the inhabitants. When they had got so far that he thought she must now go on alone, he whistled softly to the dog, and she understood that this was the sign that they must part. She stood still, and looked so unhappy and lonely, that he was obliged to whisper to her,

‘Now I will pray for you here, Mildrid, and then I will come when you need me.’

She thanked him with her eyes, but somewhat absently, for she could neither think nor see clearly; and then she went. As soon as she was quite out of the copse, she could look right into the large room of the principal entrance—nay, she could look right through it, for the room had windows on both sides, looking on to the wood and on to the village. Hans seated himself, on one side, behind the nearest bushes: here he could see everything that went on in the room, but at present it was empty. When Mildrid reached the barn she looked round once more, and he nodded to her.

She went round the barn, and disappeared in the yard.

Here everything was in its usual order, and everywhere peace and silence prevailed. Some fowls were walking about in the back yard. Near the wall of the store-house, on the left, poles had been set up for drying the hay : she did not observe any other change.

She wanted to turn to the right, to go into the grandmother's room ; probably she was afraid, and wished to gain a little respite before meeting with her parents. But between the two buildings stood her father by the chopping-block, making a handle for his hatchet. He wore a knitted jacket, with his braces over it ; his head was uncovered, and his long thin hair was blown over his forehead by the gentle breeze just beginning to rise from the valley. He looked strong, almost cheerful, at his work ; so that she took courage to look straight at him. He did not notice her, so gently and cautiously did she step along over the stones.

‘ Good-morning,’ whispered she.

He looked at her for some time in surprise.

‘ Is it you, Mildrid ? Has anything happened ?’ added he quickly, turning an inquiring glance on her.

‘ No,’ answered she, blushing slightly.

But his eyes remained firmly fixed on her, and she did not lift hers up to him. He put away his hatchet. .

‘Let us go into the house to mother,’ said he.

On their way he asked after the condition of the cattle on the Saeter, and received satisfactory answers. ‘Now Hans sees us going into the house,’ thought Mildrid, when they entered the open space between the barn and the storehouse on the other side. When they reached the room he went to the kitchen-door and opened it.

‘Come in, mother,’ he called into the kitchen; ‘Mildrid is here.’

‘My dear, has anything happened?’ was asked from the kitchen.

‘No,’ answered Mildrid behind her father, as she herself stepped into the doorway. Then she went into the kitchen to her mother, who sat before the hearth, and was peeling potatoes.

Her mother now looked at Mildrid as searchingly as her father had done before, and her glance had the same effect. Randi stood up, after putting down the dish, went to the door on the other side, and said something there; then she came back, washed her hands, and joined the others. They all three went into the room.

Mildrid knew her parents; so she knew that these preparations meant they expected to hear something unusual. Her courage had not been great before, now it became still less. The father sat down near the seat of honour, next the most distant window, which looked out on the village.

The mother had seated herself on the same seat, but nearer the window. Mildrid seated herself on the front seat ; that is the long bench before the table. There Hans could see her ; and he could look straight into the father's face, but not into the mother's.

As the father had done before, the mother now asked how everything was going on on the Saeter ; and she received the same information and a little more, for she asked more particularly. Although it was evident that both parties prolonged the conversation, the subject was soon exhausted. During the pause that now ensued, both parents looked at Mildrid. She avoided their glance, and asked what news there was in the valley. Although this subject too was made the most of, it also soon came to an end. The same silence, the same expectant looks turned on the daughter. She knew of nothing more to ask now, and so began to pass the palm of her hand over the bench on which she sat.

‘Have you been to grandmother's?’ asked the mother, who began to feel anxious.

No, she had not been there.

This was as much as to say that the daughter had a certain mission to her parents, and now she could not well hesitate any longer.

‘There is something that it is my duty to tell you,’ she began at last, casting down her eyes, while she constantly changed colour.

The parents looked at each other sorrowfully. Mildrid raised her head with large imploring eyes.

‘What is it, my child?’ asked the mother, full of alarm.

‘I am engaged,’ said Mildrid ; let her head fall, and burst into tears.

A more stunning blow could not have fallen into this quiet circle. Pale and silent the parents looked at one another. The steady gentle Mildrid, for whose thoughtful obedient nature the parents had so often thanked God, had taken the most important step in life without their advice, without even their knowledge—that step that had pressed its mark on the past and future of her parents.

At this moment Mildrid could feel each of their thoughts, and fear stopped her tears. Slowly and kindly the father asked,

‘To whom, my child?’

After a pause, the whispered answer came :

‘To Hans Haugen.’

For more than twenty years no name or action of any Haugen had been mentioned in this room. In the parents’ eyes only evil had come into their dwelling from Haugen. Again Mildrid guessed their thoughts ; she sat there motionless, awaiting her sentence.

But again her father spoke slowly and gently,

‘We do not know this man, neither I nor your mother. Nor did we know that you knew him.’

‘No, I did not know him either,’ said Mildrid. The astonished parents looked at one another.

‘How has it come about, then?’

It was the mother who put this question.

‘I do not know myself,’ answered Mildrid.

‘But, my dear child, you ought to be able to control yourself.’

Mildrid did not answer.

‘We thought,’ added her father kindly, ‘we could have trusted you implicitly.’

Mildrid did not answer.

‘But how did it come about?’ repeated the mother more eagerly. ‘You must know that.’

‘No, I do not know. I only know that I could not help it—no, I could not.’

She was obliged to hold herself on her seat with both hands.

‘God comfort you and make you better! What has come to you?’

Mildrid did not answer.

Once more the father calmed the mother’s anger. Quietly and kindly he asked, ‘Why did you not speak to any of us about it, my child?’

The mother also joined in the father’s kind tone, and said gently,

‘You know how much we have always thought of you children, we who have lived so much alone; and we may well say it, especially of you, Mildrid, for you were always made most of by us!’

Mildrid no longer felt the seat on which she was sitting.

‘Yes, we did not think that you would leave us.’

It was the father who said this. The words sounded gentle, but they gave none the less pain.

‘I do not want to leave you,’ stammered she.

‘You must not speak so,’ answered he, more gravely than before, ‘for you have left us already.’

Mildrid felt that it was true; and yet it was not true, but she could not disentangle the matter.

The mother said,

‘What use has it been to us that we were loving and God-fearing in our conduct towards our children? At the first trial—’

She did not want to say more, for her daughter’s sake. But Mildrid could endure it no longer.

‘I do not want to leave you. I do not want to cause you pain; but I could not help it—no, I could not help it!’

She threw herself on her arm across the table, turning towards her father, and sobbed.

Neither of them could bear to add reproaches to the repentance she seemed to feel; and so silence ensued. This might have lasted a long time; but Hans Haugen, from his station, guessed that it was time to come to her assistance. With his huntsman’s eye he had seen her throw herself over the table, and he jumped up.

His light step was soon heard in the passage.

He knocked ; but no one said ' Come in ! ' Mildrid half rose, blushing through her tears. The door was open ; Hans stood there, with his gun and dog, pale, but calm. He turned round and shut the door, while the dog rushed up to Mildrid, wagging his tail. Hans was too much excited to notice that the dog had come in too.

' Good-day,' said he.

Mildrid sank back on to the bench, drew a long breath, and looked at him relieved ; her fear, her reproaches of conscience, had left her. She was right ; yes, she was right. Now let everything turn out as God willed.

No one had answered his salutation, and no one asked him to come nearer.

' I am Hans Haugen,' said he gently, stood his gun on the ground, and placed his hand on it.

After the parents had exchanged several glances, he continued, but with an inner struggle,

' I have followed Mildrid here ; for if she has done wrong, it is my fault.'

Something had to be said. The mother looked at the father ; and he said at length that this had come about without their knowledge, and Mildrid could give them no explanation about what had happened. But Hans answered he could not do so either.

' I am no longer a boy,' said he, ' for I am twenty-eight years old ; and yet it happened so that I,

who hitherto have never cared for any one, from the moment when I saw her, could think of nothing else in the world. If she had said no—I cannot tell, but I do not think there would have been much more to be done with me.’

The simple straightforward manner in which he said this made a good impression. Mildrid trembled on her seat, for she felt that this gave a different aspect to the matter. He had his cap on his head, for it was not customary in that part of the country for a stranger to take off his hat when he came in; but now he took it off involuntarily, hung it on the barrel of his gun, and placed his hands over it. There was something in the young man’s bearing which demanded politeness.

‘As Mildrid is so young,’ said the mother, ‘none of us had thought that she could do anything like this yet.’

‘That is true; but then I am so much the older,’ answered he, ‘and my household is not large, it will not require very much work; and besides, she will have plenty of help.’

The parents looked at one another, then at Mildrid.

‘Is she to go with you into your house?’ asked the father suspiciously, with a slight touch of scorn.

‘Yes,’ said Hans, ‘for I do not woo the farm.’

He blushed, and Mildrid turned red also.

Had the farm sunk into the earth, the parents

would not have been more surprised than they were now at hearing it scorned, and Mildrid's silence proved to them that she agreed. At any rate this resolve of the young people placed the decision somewhat out of the power of the parents themselves, and they felt humbled.

'And then you said that you would not leave us,' said the mother, with silent reproach, and this struck home.

But Hans came to her assistance.

'Leave you? Every child that marries must leave her parents.'

He smiled, and added kindly,

'The journey is not a long one. It is not much more than three miles from here to Haugen.'

But in reality it is not words on which it depends at such times ; thoughts will take their own way without much regard for the words. The parents felt themselves forsaken, betrayed by the young people's decision. They knew well enough that it was possible to live very comfortably at Haugen ; travellers had brought the place into esteem ; it had even been occasionally mentioned in the papers, but yet Haugen was Haugen ; and that Mildrid, their dearest child, should travel back the journey of their race to Haugen—that was too much. Under such circumstances other people would perhaps have grown angry, but these two preferred quietly to dispose of matters that did not

please them. They therefore exchanged a glance of intelligence, and the father said gently,

‘These are too many things at once; we cannot answer them all immediately.’

‘No,’ said the mother; ‘we did not expect to hear so great a piece of news—and to hear it in such a manner.’

Hans hesitated a little before he answered,

‘It is true, Mildrid ought to have asked her parents first. But as neither of us knew anything about it, until it was too late—? For this is how it happened. So we could not do otherwise than come here at once, after it had happened; and that is what we have done. You must not be too severe.’

After this explanation there was really nothing more to be said against her conduct, and his quiet manner convinced them of the truth of his statement. Indeed the father felt that he was not equal to him; and as he had not much confidence in himself, he was the more anxious to bring the matter to an end.

‘We do not know you,’ said he, looking at his wife. ‘We must have time to think.’

‘Yes, that is certainly best,’ said Randi; ‘for we must know the man to whom we give our child.’

Mildrid felt how wounding were these words, but she looked imploringly at Hans.

‘That is true,’ said Hans, turning the gun under

his hand. 'Although I do not think that there are many people in the valley who are better known than I am. But perhaps some one has said some harm of me.'

He looked up at them. Mildrid became confused on her parents' account ; and they felt themselves that they might have roused suspicion, and that they did not wish to do.

'No, we have heard no harm of you,' said both at once ; and the mother hastened to add that it was indeed the case, they really did not know him, for they had taken so little notice of the people at Haugen.

She did not mean this unkindly ; but not till the words had passed her lips did she understand that she had not expressed herself happily, and she could perceive that her husband and Mildrid felt this too.

She waited some time for an answer.

'If the family at Tingvold has not troubled itself much about the people at Haugen, that is not our fault ; for up to the last few years we have been poor people.'

In these few words lay a reproach which all three felt, deeply felt, to be well-grounded. But never before to-day had it occurred to husband or wife, who had lived in retirement, and wrapped up in their sorrow, that they had neglected a duty here. Never till to-day had it occurred to them that the

poor relations at Haugen ought not to suffer for their misfortunes, for they were quite innocent in the matter. They looked at one another in confusion, and then they looked down much ashamed.

Hans had spoken quite calmly, although the woman's answer must have irritated him. Both therefore felt that they had a worthy man before them, and that there was a double wrong to atone for. So the father said,

'Leave us a little time for consideration. Can you not stay here and dine with us? We can have some more talk together then.'

'Do come nearer and sit down,' added the mother.

They both rose.

Hans put aside the gun with the cap hanging on it, and went towards the bench on which Mildrid sat. She stood up at once without knowing why. The mother went off, saying she must go to the kitchen. The father seemed about to follow her, but Mildrid would not stay with Hans alone so long as her parents refused their consent. She went out at the other door, and soon after they saw her going across the yard to her grandmother's. So the man could not leave Hans alone, and turned back and sat down again.

Hans's polite manner was especially noticeable at the dinner-table. He sat near the wall opposite to the mother and Mildrid: the father sat at the

end of the table on the seat of honour. The servants had already dined in the kitchen, where they generally all dined together. But to-day they did not yet want to show Hans to the people. Mildrid felt at table that her mother looked at her when Hans smiled. He had a serious face, but it wore a very winning expression when he smiled. She noticed this, and several other things, and in this manner collected a number of impressions that were all in his favour. But she was not yet satisfied; there was a strained feeling prevailing, so that she would have been glad to leave the room; and scarcely was dinner over when she went back to her grandmother's.

The men went for a walk in the yard, but took care not to go where the workmen were; and they also avoided those places where the grandmother could see them. Then they returned to the room. And now the mother had also finished her work in the kitchen, and was able to come and sit by them. The conversation gradually became more confidential; and after some time, but not before twilight had come on, the mother summoned up courage, and begged Hans to relate how it had all come about between him and Mildrid, since Mildrid herself had not been able to give any information. It may have been chiefly feminine curiosity that urged the mother to ask, but the question was very welcome to Hans.

The Wedding.

At their life afterwards I will take some glimpses.

The first is the wedding-day of the young people. Inga, Mildrid's cousin, who was now herself a wife, had come to deck the bride. This took place in the storehouse ; the old chest, containing the bridal adornments of the family—crown, girdle, kerchief, buckles, rings—had been brought out. The grandmother had the key to it ; she was present herself at the opening, and Beret followed as her assistant.

Mildrid had already put on her wedding-dress, and all her own ornaments, when the splendour which Beret and the grandmother had been polishing the week before was brought to light, massive and shining. One piece after another was examined. Beret held the glass before the bride. The old woman related how many of her family had worn this silver on their wedding-day ; but the happiest of all was her own mother, Aslang Haugen. At that moment the old family wedding-march sounded outside. All stopped, listened, and then ran to the door to see what it could be.

The first person they saw was Endrid, the bride's father. He had seen Hans Haugen drive into the yard with his brothers and sisters. It was not often that Endrid had an idea beyond the

ordinary, but to-day it did occur to him that his guests ought to be received with the family wedding-march. He fetched out the musicians, and let them play. There he stood himself next them by the storehouse, holding in his hand a silver tankard filled with the wedding-ale. Some others had joined him. Hans and his faithful relatives came driving into the yard in two carriages, and it was evident that they were touched by this reception.

An hour later the wedding-march was of course again struck up. This was when the bride and bridegroom, and the parents of the bride, and the grandmother and Beret, and the bridegroom's relations left the house, two by two, to enter the carriages. There are some moments in our lives when everything seems propitious ; and so on this day the bridal party drove away in the brightest spring weather from Tingvold. The crowd at the church was so great that no one could remember having seen anything like it on any previous occasion. Every one in this assembly knew the story of the family, and knew how closely the wedding-march that now sounded gleefully in the sunshine over bride and bridegroom was interwoven with it.

And because all thoughts joined in this, the minister chose a text for the wedding which enabled him to show that children are the crown of our life, which shines by our honour, our development, and our labour.

On leaving the church Hans remained standing before the church-door. He was saying something. The bride did not hear it in her intense happiness, but she guessed it. He wished her to throw a glance at Ole Haugen's grave, which lay covered with flowers. She did so; and they directed their steps so that they had to pass close by his grave-stone. The parents followed them.

BALZAC.

BORN IN TOURS, MAY 16, 1799; DIED IN PARIS,
AUG. 20, 1850.

BALZAC.

IT is quite impossible to give, within our narrow limits, any adequate idea of the writings of the most remarkable of all French novelists—a writer who, in a manner, has been the founder of the whole modern realistic school. Balzac has left behind him more than a hundred volumes of imaginative works ; and if all are not of equal excellence, yet all contain something remarkable, either in the way of description, analysis, human portraiture, reflections, or digressions. He is the most prolific, the most versatile, of authors. His novels are by no means light reading ; they are packed full of matter ; conversations have little part in them ; they consist chiefly of elaborate descriptions or narrative of the most closely woven sort. Taine has said of Balzac that he is, ‘with Shakespeare and St.-Simon, the greatest storehouse of documents we possess on human nature.’ It does indeed seem possible that when Balzac’s novels are no longer read as stories, they may still be consulted for their wonderful sagacity, their marvellous sentences, their psychological and physiological insight into life. At times

his too detailed descriptions, in which accessories grow to the dimension of the principal action, begin to weary us, when suddenly we come to some saying that illumines a side of human nature like a flash of lightning, and compensates for any fatigue we may have felt. It was Balzac's ambition to range over the whole field of human life, to touch upon every phase of existence, to follow man in every straight or devious path he could tread. He wished to become the chronicler of the manners of the nineteenth century—to write the natural history of society—considering that historians occupied themselves too exclusively with political facts, and left out of sight the nature of the men and women who lived in the various ages described by them, and who gave colour to the century, also the peculiar nature of their impetus to the events. It was a gigantic work that he proposed to himself; and to determine whether he succeeded in its accomplishment would need an investigation beyond our limits. Balzac called his collective works, amid which are some masterpieces, 'The Comedy of Human Life.' A French writer has said that this comedy, as presented by Balzac, is more aptly defined as 'a pathological museum of human nature, a collection of specimens, every one of which exhibits disease.' An epigrammatic verdict upon a writer, especially upon one so voluminous as Balzac, must always be received with caution; the

temptation is too great to sacrifice rigid truth for the sake of epigrammatic effect. This is the case also in this dictum, which unquestionably contains some truth, but not the whole. Balzac's figures are certainly not always of the most healthy type ; his creations are at times impossible beings ; his fancies too often smell of the lamp : yet for all this he has called into existence figures that will live in literature, that stand out firm and strong and vivid ; and, considering how great are the number of personages that pass across his stage, his success in conjuring them into life has been prodigious. He himself claims to have created over two thousand of such figures—a portentous number, even if only half of them be real or possible.

The mere enumeration of Balzac's works would fill pages. He wrote incessantly, though not with ease ; his works were written and re-written ; he often required to have ten or twelve proofs, reconstructing the whole work when already in print, so that the cost of printer's corrections would occasionally swallow up the author's profit. Sixteen hours was his average working allowance ; but at times he worked yet longer, allowing himself neither rest nor recreation. His strength must have been great to have borne the strain as long as it did ; it is not astonishing that he should have broken down early, and have ended his life at fifty. The more so as he chiefly worked at night, and

used the stimulant of black coffee to excite his imagination and string his nerves. Though working so unintermittently, and receiving for the time fair prices for his work, Balzac was all his life struggling with debt. Money is the burden of all his letters, his *idée fixe*, his one ambition, the great motor force in his own life and in that of his characters. He was always being paid in advance, often for work that he finally failed to accomplish ; for his appetite for achievement and his imagination as to what he could accomplish were beyond realisation in this finite life, and yet debts, debts, debts, is the burden of all his personal utterances. There is no question but that he was extravagant. His imagination gloated upon the material things of this life ; he desired to surround himself with every form of luxury, and in consequence his purse could never keep pace with his aspirations. It is mournful to discern, in reading Balzac's letters, how he sacrificed even his genius to this craving after gold, or rather after what gold could procure. All his works, even the best, bear marks of having been written in haste and under the pressure of embarrassment. Balzac was always desiring to realise their value, and to push them aside for others that should bring him in yet more. So active was his imagination that he could write two, three, and even more novels at the same time ; but there is no doubt that they suffered from this. There is

a want of measure, at times of good taste, in his books that would probably have been absent had he given himself time to think.

The history of Balzac's life is little more than the history of his writings. He was the son of a government official, and was destined by his father for a profession. Instead he was resolved to become a man of letters, and went to Paris in 1819 determined to try his luck. Here he lived wretchedly for some time, writing some poor tales and novels, for which, however, he received just enough to keep himself alive. After many long and vain attempts, and writing nearly thirty worthless tales, Balzac achieved a success with *Les Chouans*, published in 1829, and succeeded quickly by *La Physiologie du Mariage*, a highly original work, full of keen observation of men and women. This, in its turn, was followed by that most remarkable romance, *La Peau de Chagrin*, a marvellous study of the supernatural in ordinary life. Balzac had at last achieved fame, and commanded attention. From this time until his death his novels followed each other with astonishing rapidity. They painted with minuteness and acumen scenes from various phases of life. Existence, as it evinces itself in private, Parisian, provincial, political, military, and country surroundings, was analysed by Balzac's searching pen. Further, he wrote studies of character, which he called analytical and philosophical essays,

and a series of humorous tales written in early French. Of his numerous works, *Eugénie Grandet*, *Le Père Goriot*, *La Cousine Bette*, are perhaps the most familiar to English readers. After the publication, in 1835, of *Le Médecin de Campagne* he received a letter expressing interest from a Polish lady, Countess de Hanska, then living with her husband at Geneva. Balzac replied to her letter, a correspondence was begun ; ultimately they became acquainted ; the count died, and intimacy ripened into love. By and by, after the countess had become a widow, there crept into these letters the mention of marriage ; only Balzac was hampered by debt, and the lady by political difficulties, she being a Russian subject. Balzac's correspondence with her is most interesting, and furnishes more insight into his character and more biographical data than had been possessed before its publication. After he had formed the plan of marrying her, he slaved yet more in order to free himself from debt. He writes : ' I go to my work as the gambler to the gaming-table. I am now sleeping only five hours, and working eighteen.' He worked until his health was undermined, until the physicians positively enjoined rest. He took a short holiday, spending the winter of 1849 on Madame Hanska's Polish estates. Soon after his return he was able to announce to her that he had at last reached the goal ; that his debts were paid, and that henceforth his

money would be his own. He prepared a house to receive her, furnishing it with all the luxury and splendour suggested to him by his lively imagination, which delighted in furniture and objects of art. At the age of fifty Balzac wrote to a dear friend announcing the *dénouement* of that 'great beautiful drama of the heart which has lasted these sixteen years. Three days ago I married the only woman I have loved, whom I love more than ever, and whom I shall love till death. I believe this union is the reward that God has held in reserve for me through so many adversities, years of work, difficulties suffered and surmounted. I had neither a happy youth nor a flowering spring; I shall have the most brilliant summer, the sweetest of autumns.'

Alas for poor human hopes! Three months after the marriage that he had anticipated so long, that had made him so happy, Balzac succumbed to the disease of the heart that had been induced by his hard and unremitting labours. The joys of autumn were not for him.

A Cretin Village.

('Le Médecin de Campagne.')

The river, checked by the base of the mountain, forms a little lake, beyond which the peaks rise story above story, revealing their numerous

valleys by the various shades of light, or by the greater or less distinctness of their ridges, overgrown with dark firs. The mill, lately built near the fall of the torrent in the little lake, has the charm of an isolated house hidden amongst the waters, between the summits of several aquatic trees. On the other side of the stream, at the foot of a mountain, whose summit was then fully illumined by the red light of the setting sun, Genestas perceived a dozen deserted cottages, without windows or doors : their neglected roofs showed large holes. The surrounding territory was laid out in fields, thoroughly ploughed and sown. What had once been gardens was converted into meadows, watered by irrigation as ingenious as that in Limousin. The officer stood still mechanically to look at the ruins of this village.

Why is it that men cannot look upon even the humblest ruins without deep emotion? Doubtless they are to them an emblem of sorrow, of which all feel the weight so diversely. Cemeteries remind us of death ; a deserted village suggests to us the troubles of life ; death is an expected evil ; the troubles of life are infinite. Is not the infinite the secret of the deepest melancholy? The officer had reached the stony road to the mill without being able to understand the abandonment of this village. He inquired for Benassis of a miller's boy, seated on some sacks of wheat at the house-door.

‘M. Benassis has gone there,’ said the miller, pointing to one of the ruined cottages.

‘Has this village been burnt down?’ asked the officer.

‘No, sir.’

‘Then why is it in this state?’ asked Genestas.

‘Ah, why?’ repeated the miller, shrugging his shoulders, and returning to his house. ‘M. Benassis will tell you.’

The officer crossed a sort of bridge, constructed of large stones, between which the torrent flows, and soon reached the house that had been pointed out to him. The thatch of this dwelling was still entire; it was moss-covered, but without holes, and the locks seemed to be in good condition. As he entered Genestas saw a fire on the hearth, beside which an invalid was seated on a chair. Before him knelt a woman, while a man stood upright, with his face towards the fire. The interior of this dwelling consisted of a single room, lighted by one old window, covered by linen. The floor was the bare earth; the furniture consisted of a chair, a table, and a truckle-bed. Never had the officer seen anything so simple and bare—not even in Russia, where the huts of the mujiks resemble dens. Here nothing attested the needs of life; there was not even the smallest utensil needful for preparing the coarsest food. You might have called it a dog’s kennel, without his basin. But for the truckle-

bed, a worn-out coat hanging on a peg, and some wooden shoes bound with straw—the invalid's day-clothes—this cottage would have seemed as deserted as the others. The kneeling figure, an old peasant-woman, was trying to keep the feet of the sick man in a bucket full of some brown water. Distinguishing a footstep that the sound of the spurs rendered unusual to ears accustomed to the monotonous step of the country people, the man turned to Genestas, displaying some surprise, shared by the old woman.

‘I need not ask whether you are M. Benassis,’ said the soldier. ‘A stranger, and impatient to see you, you will excuse me, sir, for having come to seek you on your field of battle, instead of awaiting you at your own house. Do not let me disturb you ; finish your business. When you have done I will tell you the object of my visit.’

Genestas leaned against the edge of the table, and kept silence. The fire diffused into the cottage a brighter light than that of the sun, whose rays, intercepted by the mountain-tops, can never penetrate into this part of the valley. By the light of the fire, made with some branches of resinous fir, which had a brilliant flame, the soldier beheld the face of the man whom a secret interest urged him to seek out, study, and learn to know perfectly. M. Benassis, the doctor of this canton, remained with his arms crossed, listened coldly to Genestas,

returned his bow, and resumed his attentions to the invalid, unconscious of being the object of so severe a scrutiny as the soldier's.

Benassis was a man of ordinary height, but with broad chest and shoulders. A large green overcoat, buttoned up to the neck, prevented the officer from taking in the details so characteristic of this person or his bearing; but the shade and immobility in which his body remained made the face, just then lighted up by the reflection of the flames, stand out the more. This man had a face like a satyr's—the same slightly-arched forehead, full of projections more or less significant; the same turned-up nose, with an expressive cleft at the tip; the same projecting cheek-bones. The mouth was wavy, the lips thick and red; the chin retreated sharply; the brown eyes, animated by a lively gaze, to which the pearly-white of the eye lent much brilliancy, revealed quenched passions. The hair once black and now gray; the deep wrinkles of his face, and thick white eyebrows; his nose, which had grown thick and veined; his yellow complexion, mottled with red patches—all pointed to the age of fifty years, and the rough labours of his profession. The officer could only guess at the size of his head, then covered by a cap; but although hidden by the head-covering, it seemed to him to be one of those heads generally designated as 'square.' Accustomed by his

experience of those energetic men whom Napoleon employed to recognise the features of those destined to great things, Genestas guessed at some mystery in this obscure existence, and said to himself, as he gazed at this extraordinary face, 'By what chance has he remained a country doctor?' After having seriously studied this physiognomy, which, notwithstanding its resemblance to other human faces, betrayed a secret existence out of harmony with this apparent vulgarity, he naturally shared in the attention that the doctor gave to the sick man, and the sight of this invalid immediately changed the course of his reflections.

In spite of the innumerable sights that a military life affords, the old trooper experienced an emotion of surprise, accompanied by horror, at beholding a human face which could never have been lighted by thought—a livid face in which suffering appeared naïve and silent, as in the face of a child who cannot yet speak, and can cry no longer, in fact the merely animal countenance of an old dying cretin. The cretin was the only variety of the human race that the chief of the squadron had never yet seen. At the sight of a forehead whose skin formed one thick roll, two eyes like those of a boiled fish, a head covered with little stunted hairs which lacked all nourishment, a head depressed, and wanting all the organs of sense, who would not have felt, like Genestas, a sentiment of involuntary

disgust at a creature who had neither the graces of an animal nor the privileges of a man, who had never possessed either reason or instinct, and had never heard or spoken any kind of language. Seeing this poor creature arrive at the end of a career that was not life, it seemed difficult to accord him a single regret ; and yet the old woman regarded him with touching anxiety, and passed her hands over the part of his legs that was not being bathed with as much affection as if he had been her husband. Benassis himself, after having studied this death-like face and these lifeless eyes, gently took the cretin's hand, and felt his pulse.

‘The bath is not working,’ said he ; ‘let us put him back to bed.’ He himself took up this mass of flesh, placed it on the truckle-bed, whence he had no doubt taken it ; extended it carefully, drawing out the legs which were already growing cold, arranging the hands and the head with the care a mother would have for her child.

‘All is over ; he will die,’ added Benassis, who remained standing at the foot of the bed.

The old woman stood with her hands on her hips, watching the dying man, and letting drop some tears. Genestas also remained silent, without being able to understand why the death of so uninteresting a being made so much impression on him. Already he instinctively began to share the boundless pity that these unfortunate creatures in-

spire in the sunless valleys into which Nature has cast them. Does not this sentiment, which has degenerated into a religious superstition in the families to which the cretins belong, spring from the fairest of Christian virtues, charity, and from the faith, the most truly useful to social order, the belief in future rewards, the only belief that helps us accept our misfortunes? The hope of deserving eternal felicity helps the relatives and neighbours of these poor creatures to practise on a large scale the cares of maternity in the sublime protection incessantly given to a helpless creature who at first does not understand it, and afterwards forgets it. Wonderful religion! It has placed the succour of blind charity near blind misfortune. Where the cretins are found, the population believe that the presence of one of these beings brings happiness to the family. This belief serves to sweeten an existence which in the heart of towns would be condemned to the rigors of a false philanthropy, and to the discipline of an asylum. In the upper valley of the Isère, where they abound, the cretins live out in the open air among the flocks they have been trained to tend. At least they are free and respected as misfortune ought to be.

For the last moment the village bell had been sounding its strokes at regular intervals, to inform the faithful of the death of one among them. Travelling through space, this religious sentiment

was weakened ere it reached the cottage, where it caused double melancholy. Numerous footsteps sounded in the street and proclaimed a crowd, but a silent crowd. Then the Church chants suddenly resounded, awakening those confused notions which overcome even the most unbelieving spirits, forced to yield to the touching harmonies of the human voice. The Church was coming to the aid of this creature who did not even know her. The priest appeared, preceded by the cross, carried by a choir-boy, and followed by the sacristan bearing the holy water, and by about fifty women, old men, and children, who had all come to join their prayers to those of the Church. The doctor and soldier looked at each other in silence, and retired into a corner to make way for the crowd, which kneeled down inside and outside the cottage. During the consoling ceremony of the Viaticum, celebrated for this creature who had never sinned, but to whom the Christian world bade farewell, most of these coarse faces appeared touched by sincere emotion. Some tears poured down cheeks cracked by the sun, and browned by work in the open air. This sentiment of voluntary relationship was quite simple. There was no one in the commune who would not have pitied this poor creature, who would not have given him his daily bread. Had he not found a father in every child, a mother even in the merriest little girl?

‘He is dead,’ said the priest.

This word roused the sincerest consternation. The tapers were lighted. Several people offered to spend the night with the body. Benassis and the soldier went out. At the door several peasants stopped the doctor to say, ‘Ah, sir, if you have not saved him, no doubt God wanted to take him back to Himself!’

‘I have done my best, my children,’ replied the doctor. ‘You would hardly believe, sir,’ said he to Genestas, when they were a little way from the deserted village, whose last inhabitant had just died, ‘how much sincere comfort the words of those peasants have given me. Ten years ago I was almost stoned in this village, which is deserted to-day, but was then inhabited by thirty families.’

Genestas conveyed so evident a question by his expression and manner that the doctor related to him as they walked along the story announced by this introduction :

‘Sir, when I came to settle here, I found in this part of the canton a dozen cretins,’ said the doctor, turning round to point out to the officer the ruined houses. ‘The situation of this hamlet, in a hollow where there is no current of air, near the torrent whose waters spring from melted snow, deprived of the benefits of the sun, which only shines on the summit of the mountain, favours the propagation of this terrible disease. The law does not forbid

the marriage of these unfortunate beings, who are protected here by a superstition whose force was unknown to me, and which I at first condemned and afterwards admired. The cretins have thus spread from this spot as far as the valley. Was it not a great benefit to the country to stop this physical and intellectual contagion? In spite of the necessity, this benefit might cost the life of whoever undertook to effect it. Here, as in other social spheres, it was necessary in doing good to come in collision, not with interests, but a more dangerous thing, with religion, religious ideas converted into superstition, the most indestructible form of human ideas. I let nothing frighten me. I began by soliciting the post of mayor of the canton, and obtained it; then, after receiving the verbal approbation of the prefect, I paid to have some of these creatures transported by night to Aiguebelle in Savoy, where there are many of them, and where they were to be very well treated. As soon as this act of humanity was made known, the whole population looked upon me with horror. The priest preached against me. In spite of my endeavours to explain to the most sensible people of the district how important was the expulsion of these cretins, in spite of the gratuitous services I rendered the sick people of the country, a shot was fired at me from a wood. I went to see the Bishop of Grenoble, and asked him to change the priest. His reverence was so good

as to allow me to choose a priest who could share in my labours ; and I had the good fortune to meet with one of those men who seem to have fallen from heaven. I continued my enterprise. After having worked upon people's minds, I transported six other cretins by night. At this second attempt I had on my side some people I had obliged and the members of the council of the commune, to whose avarice I had appealed by proving to them how expensive was the maintenance of these poor creatures, and how profitable it would be to the borough to convert the land held by them without any right into communal land, which was lacking to the town. I had the rich on my side ; but the poor, the old women, the children, and some obstinate people remained hostile. Unfortunately my last transportation was incomplete. The cretin you have just seen had not returned to his home, and had not been taken. He returned next day, the only one of his kind, to the village, where lived still some families whose members, although almost idiotic, had not yet become cretins. I wished to finish my work, and went by day in my official character to remove this unfortunate man from his house. My intention was known as soon as I left my house ; the cretin's friends were before me, and I found in the cottage an assembly of women, children, and old men, who all greeted me with abuse, accompanied by a shower of stones. In this tumult,

in the midst of which I might easily have fallen a victim to the real intoxication which seizes a crowd excited by the shouts and the agitation of feelings expressed in common, I was saved by the cretin. This poor creature left his hut, began his clucking noise, and appeared as the supreme head of these fanatics. At this sight the shouts ceased. It occurred to me to propose a compromise ; and I was able to explain it by help of the quiet which had so happily set in. Doubtless my approvers would not dare to support me in this matter ; their assistance would be merely passive ; these superstitious people would guard the preservation of their last idol with the greatest zeal ; it appeared impossible to deprive them of it. I promised, therefore, to leave the cretin in peace in his house on the condition that no one should go near him ; that the families of the village should cross the water, and should come to live in the town in the new houses that I undertook to build, adding to them the land, the price of which should be paid me later on by the commune. Well, my dear sir, it took me six months to conquer the opposition the execution of this bargain met with, notwithstanding its advantages for the families of this village. The affection of the country people for their ruins is an unaccountable thing. However unhealthy his cottage may be, a peasant has much more attachment for it than a banker for his mansion. Why, I do

not know. Perhaps sentiments are stronger the rarer they are. Perhaps the man who lives little by thought lives much by things ; and the fewer he possesses the more, probably, he loves them. Perhaps the peasant is like the prisoner. He does not dissipate the powers of his soul ; he concentrates them all on a single idea, and thus attains great energy of sentiment. Forgive these reflections from a man who very seldom exchanges his thoughts. And do not think, sir, that I have occupied myself much with empty ideas. Here everything must be deed and action. Alas, the fewer ideas these poor people possess, the more difficult it is to make them understand their real interest ! So I was quite resigned to all the details of my enterprise. Each of them said the same thing to me, one of those things full of good sense which allow of no answer : " Ah, sir, your houses are not yet built ! " " Well," said I, " promise to come and live in them as soon as they are finished." Fortunately, sir, I obtained the decision that our town has the ownership of the whole mountain, at the foot of which is the now deserted village. The value of the woods on the heights sufficed to pay for this land and that of the promised houses, which were being constructed. When one of my obstinate households was established, the others did not hesitate to follow. The good results of this change were too evident not to be appreciated by those

who clung the most tenaciously to their sunless—I might say their soulless—village. The conclusion of this matter, the acquisition of common property, the possession of which was confirmed to us by the Council of the State, helped me to acquire great importance in the canton. But, sir, what an amount of trouble!’ exclaimed the doctor, stopping and raising a hand that he let fall in an eloquent gesture. ‘Only *I* know the distance from the town to the prefecture, whence nothing goes out ; and from the prefecture to the Council of State, where nothing enters. However,’ continued he, ‘peace be with the powers of the earth ; they have yielded to my prayers—that is a great deal. If you knew the good produced by one signature carelessly given ! Sir, two years after I had attempted such great-little things and brought them to a conclusion, all the poor households in my commune possessed at least two cows, and sent them to graze on the mountain, where, without awaiting the authorisation of the Council of State, I had effected transverse irrigation like that of Switzerland, Auvergne, and Limousin. To their great surprise, the townspeople saw excellent pasturage sprout forth, and obtained a larger quantity of milk, thanks to the better quality of the grass. The results of this victory were immense ; every one imitated my irrigation. The meadows, the cattle—all productions were multiplied. From that time I was able fearlessly to undertake the

amelioration of this still uncultivated bit of land, and to civilise its inhabitants hitherto deprived of intelligence. Well, sir, we solitary men are great chatterboxes; if we are asked a question there is no knowing when our answer will stop. When I came to this valley the population consisted of 700 souls; now you may count 2000. The affair of the last cretin has obtained for me universal esteem. After having persistently shown to my subjects gentleness and firmness combined, I became the oracle of the canton. I did everything to deserve their confidence without asking it or seeming to desire it, only I tried to inspire them all with the greatest respect for my person by the conscientiousness with which I fulfilled even the most trivial duties. After promising to take care of the poor creature whom you have just seen die, I watched over him better than his former protectors had done. He has been fed and cared for as the adopted child of the commune. Later on, the inhabitants began to understand the service I had rendered them in spite of themselves. Yet they still retain a remainder of their old superstition. I am far from blaming them for it. Has not their reverence for the cretin often served me as a text to encourage those who had sense to assist the unfortunate? But here we are at home,' said Benassis, after a pause, perceiving the roof of his house.

A Breton Town.

('Beatrix.')

France and Brittany especially possess even now a few towns utterly remote from the social movement which gives its physiognomy to the nineteenth century. For want of active and continued communications with Paris, inadequately connected by a poor road with the *sous-préfecture* or chief town, on which they are dependent, these places understand or regard the new civilisation as a mere performance. They are astonished at it, but do not applaud it; yet whether they fear or laugh at it, they are faithful to the old customs, of which they have retained the imprint. He who would travel as moral archæologist, and study men instead of studying stones, might find a facsimile of the age of Louis XV. in some village of Provence, one of the age of Louis XIV. in the depths of Poitou, and one of the ages still farther remote in the depths of Brittany. Most of these towns have sunk from some height of grandeur, of which historians do not tell us, since they are more occupied with facts and dates than with manners, of which the remembrance, however, still lives in the memory as in Brittany, where the national character little permits oblivion of anything which regards this province. Many of these towns have been the capital of a little feudal state, of a county or duchy, conquered by the Crown, or shared by heirs for want of

male succession. Disinherited of their activity, these heads have now become arms. The arms, deprived of nourishment, dry up and vegetate. However, since thirty years, these portraits of past ages are beginning to be effaced, and become rarer. In working for the masses, modern industry carries on a work of destruction amid antique art, in whose works the owner had as large a share as the workman. Now we have productions, but no longer true works. Monuments play a great part in these retrospective phenomena. Thus, for industry, monuments are stone-quarries, saltpetre-mines, or cotton-factories. A few years more and these original cities will be transformed, and can no longer be seen except in this literary iconography.

One of the villages where might be found most distinctly the physiognomy of feudal centuries is Guérande. This name alone will reawaken a thousand recollections in the memory of painters, of artists, of thinkers, who may have wandered as far as the corner where lies that magnificent jewel of feudalism, so proudly posed to command the sea and the dunes, and which is like the vertex of a triangle, at the other angles of which are two other jewels no less curious—Le Croisic and the borough of Batz. Besides Guérande there are only Vitré situated in centre of Brittany, and Avignon in the south, which preserve in our time their middle-age aspect intact. To this day Guérande is encompassed by strong

walls, its wide moats are full of water, its battlements are still entire, its loopholes are not choked with vegetation, the ivy has not cast its mantle over its square or round towers. It has three gates, in which can yet be seen the rings of the portcullis. You cannot enter without crossing a drawbridge of wood and iron, which is no longer drawn, but which could still be drawn. The *mairie* was blamed in 1820 for having planted poplars along the moats to shade the promenade. The answer was that, for the last hundred years, the long beautiful esplanade of fortifications by the dunes, which seemed completed but yesterday, had been converted into a mall shaded with elms, under which the inhabitants liked to walk. There the houses have undergone no change, their number has neither augmented nor decreased, none of them have felt on their façades the mason's mallet or the whitewasher's brush, nor groaned under the weight of an added story. All have their primitive character. Some rest on wooden pillars, which form galleries under which foot-passengers walk, and whose beams have become bent without breaking. The shopkeepers' houses are small and low, fronted with slates. Wood, now rotten, has played a large part in the ornaments carved round the windows, and in the supports which project beyond the pillars in grotesque faces; they extend in the shape of fantastic beasts at the corners, inspired by

the great thought of art, which in those days animated even still-life. These antiquities, which have resisted everything, offer to painters those brown tints and shadowy outlines which their pencil loves. The streets are such as they were four hundred years ago. Only as population does not abound, as social movement is less lively, a traveller curious to examine this town, as beautiful as an antique coat of armour, can tread, not without melancholy, an almost deserted street, where the stone casements are stopped up by clay to avoid the window-tax.

This street abuts on an abandoned postern by a stone-wall, above which grows a tuft of trees, gracefully posed by the fingers of Breton Nature, one of the most luxurious and prolific vegetations of France. A poet, a painter, would remain seated absorbed in the enjoyment of the profound silence which reigns under the well-preserved vault of this postern, whither the life of this peaceful city sends no sound, whence the rich country is seen in all its magnificence through loopholes once occupied by archers and crossbow-men, and which resembles those windows placed in some summerhouses at different points of view. It is impossible to walk here without thinking at every step of the manners and customs of past times ; all the stones speak of them, in fact all ideas of the Middle Ages may be found here, but they are now merely superstition.

If by accident a gendarme with his gold-laced hat passes by, his presence is an anachronism against which our thought protests ; but nothing is rarer than to encounter a being or thing of the present. There are even few modern garments ; those which the inhabitants admit accommodate themselves in some sort to their stationary costume, their established physiognomy. The public square is full of Breton costumes, which artists come to sketch, and which stand out in a most remarkable manner. The whiteness of the linen worn by the *paludiers* (as the men are called who obtain the salt from the salt-marshes), contrasts powerfully with the blue and brown colours worn by the peasants, with the original headdresses piously retained by the women. These two classes, and those of sailors in their jackets and their shiny hats, are as distinct among themselves as the castes of India, and recognise the distance that separates the *bourgeoisie* from the aristocracy and the clergy. Here all is still sharply divided ; here the revolutionary level has found the masses too rugged and too hard to pass over them. It would have been split, if not broken. The character of immutability which Nature has given to her zoological species is found here again among men. In fact, even after the Revolution of 1830, Guérande is still a city *à part*, essentially Breton, fervently Catholic, silent, self-centred, whither new ideas but seldom obtain admission.

HEYSE.

BORN IN BERLIN, MARCH 15, 1830; NOW LIVING IN
MUNICH.

HEYSE.

PAUL HEYSE is one of the most elegant novelette-writers of Germany, and almost the only adherent in that country of the 'art for art' school. Heyse, like his French literary brethren, has no motive in view beyond immediate effect. Black is white and white is black, if the æsthetic development of his stories requires such a distortion of vision; and to construct the author's philosophy out of his works would, in his case, be impossible, since he now leans to one side, now to another, and has clearly no established opinions beyond the requirements of the moment. This has drawn upon him the stigma of immorality, an imputation from which he sturdily defended himself some years ago in a preface addressed to Madame Toutlemonde at Berlin. The preface was affixed to a volume of novelettes which he designedly called *Moral Tales*; not, as he said, admitting thereby that his former ones were immoral, but to show what he considered the difference between ordinarily decorous and strictly moral stories, *i.e.* stories with a moral aim.

He tried to develop the thesis that we must

not apply to genius the vulgar rules of morality—that great natures may and must emancipate themselves from these fetters. He became involved, however, in the snares of his own rhetoric, so that it appeared finally as though he wished to say that immorality is the mark of a great nature. Neither are all his characters by any means great natures. In short, the defence was somewhat sophistical and lame, and the reproach is still heard against Heyse. But it is really not so much a question of moral or immoral theme, it seems to us, as a question of tone. It is the tone of Heyse's novelettes that offends by its careless indifference; virtues of the whitest, vices of the darkest hues—all are spoken of with the same air of nonchalance: it is this that has, and not unduly, offended some of his critics. Yet, notwithstanding this defect, Heyse has conspicuous merits that generally, and at times entirely, throw this into the background. He is, as we have said, Germany's most elegant teller of stories, written both in fluent verse and in light graceful prose. His subjects are, as a rule, Italian; it is comparatively rarely that he lays his scenes in his native land; and had he not sometimes done so we could not have included him in our series, which demands that an author should be, above all, national. Fortunately, however, the few German stories that he has written are so characteristic that we are not obliged to omit this favourite German author.

Heyse is an idealist ; his chief charm lies in his dreamy poetical manner of treating life. His characters spring up none know whence ; they go none know whither : antecedents and probabilities are disregarded ; but while we read we fall under his spell, and do not even desire them. His stories are short ; they deal usually with but one incident in a life, and the characters and situations are skillfully sketched. There is no depth, no suggestiveness ; all is surface alike, both charm and story. An acute German critic once said of Heyse that he looks upon life from the tourist point of view—that his stories are tourist stories. The remark was so just that it has become universally cited. It is indeed the light-hearted superficial observation of the tourist that we meet with in his pages. The tourist sees the surface of a nation's life, its picturesque side ; himself gay, all things assume in his eyes a rose-coloured aspect ; he skims the cream of existence, and does not see the depths hidden beneath. It is true that Heyse affects to treat his themes psychologically, but even his psychology has a *dilettante* character. He loves to treat of the abnormal, the unusual—to dissect characters thrown into uncongenial surroundings, or brought face to face with dilemmas ; but at the last he often shirks an inevitable conclusion if this must needs lead to stern tragedy. Often melancholy and sad, he avoids the tragic as he avoids

the ugly. He admits himself that he could never write about a female character with whom he was not a little in love, and he asks indignantly why he should have to touch in fiction what he hates or feels indifferent to in real life. There are others who like to paint the repulsive, he says; they can have it to themselves. He is afraid of deep emotions; his heroes are not in general remarkable for austerity of life and principles; his characters are swayed by impulses rather than passions, which are too serious for them. Love-adventures are the heart and soul of his stories, developed in different situations and moods. There is a want of real atmosphere surrounding them; they seem enveloped in poetic æther: every thing and person bears a holiday aspect; even the language of the peasants is choice—the author lends them his own speech. Heyse's talent therefore, though pretty, is a limited one. Some years ago he attempted to write a long philosophical novel called *Kinder der Welt*. It proved no homogeneous novel, but a disjointed and involved story, replete with a certain paradoxical interest, but too abstract and over-refined to have any actuality.

Besides his prose fictions, Heyse has rendered substantial services to German literature by original poems and masterly translations from Italian authors. His life has been an easy one, and its freedom from struggles is reflected in a measure by the

easy tone of his writings. He is the son of the well-known philologist. After a careful training in Germany he was sent, at the age of twenty-two, to Italy, and acquired the knowledge of land and language he has turned to such good account. On his return King Maximilian invited him to Munich as one of the literary coterie with whom that monarch loved to surround himself; and though he resigned his post some years later, on account of some trifling political matter, he has continued to live in that city, and to devote himself exclusively to literature. His *début* was made with poetry—a poetry which is good, though by no means of the highest order; indeed, he remains in poetry a prose-writer, as in prose he is always something of a poet. Hence the defects, and hence, too, the charm of his little stories.

The Huntsman.

On the western shore of the Königssee, opposite to the steep wall of the Watzmann, which descends precipitously into the deep, a wild footpath leads straight through the wood. The woodcutters and hunters know it, the cowgirls climb on to the Alm by it, the deer run across it. Twice it passes through grassy wood-clearings, where stand solitary Sennhütten, and blockhouses in which the woodcutters spend the winter. The nearer it ap-

proaches the edge of the mountain, the fewer are the stems, until at length the ridge rises bare from out the firs and larches, and looks down freely into the beautiful valleys round about Berchtesgaden, into the dark lake at its feet, and on to the gay hunting-castle Bartholomä, encircled by lofty maples, which beckon to the wanderer from out this rocky wilderness.

In autumn, when it is the stag's rutting-time, a youth, accompanied by a young huntsman, ascended the steep path, and often looked down admiringly into the deep. He wore the customary hunter's dress; but it was evident the hand of a city tailor had tried his art on it. The fine-cloth jacket was bound with green velvet; he wore a green waistcoat of quilted silk, chamois-leather breeches to the naked knees, green stockings, whose strings were fastened by gold buttons, mountain-shoes that, in spite of the heavy nails, were as bright as possible, and were daintily fastened by yellow laces. On the brand-new pointed hunting-cap were a chamois beard and a black-cock feather; but these were fastened at the wrong place, which had long been troubling the boy of fifteen years, who bore beneath his coarse jacket the heart of an able and complete hunter, only he did not dare to tell the grand gentleman of it. He carried the beautiful double-barrelled gun meditatively after the young baron, and noticed with

satisfaction that the sharp edges of the stones which seemed sown around left many a mark on the shining polish.

But we by no means wish to rouse any prejudice against the gentleman with the fine shoes. He was a tolerable hunter in the forests of his own estates, but unaccustomed to the mountain chase, and new to the customs of the country. The higher he mounted the more cheerfully he looked about him. The autumn air made every sound from the lake distinctly audible: he heard the oarswomen, who were going to Bartholomä, singing far below, the pistol-shots fired off opposite to the echoing-wall, and the rolling roar of the echo; and when silence reigned once more, the song of the titmice in the wood, and the murmur of the little brooks. He stood still, raised his hat, and looked attentively into the woods around.

‘It is beautiful here in your country, Phrygius,’ said he to the boy, who bore into the romantic wood this classical name, bequeathed him by his ancestors, a long line of worthy schoolmasters.

‘I should think so, sir,’ exclaimed the youth. ‘There are many chamois over there in Warteck, and higher up marmots, if your honour would like to shoot one once.’

Here the conversation stopped; for Phrygius spoke the purest mountain dialect, and the baron, a Franconian, scarcely understood a word of it, and

feared to forfeit respect by questions. His desire was for a mighty stag, that was to be found up on the Regenalm, and of which he had heard from the ranger. Phrygius knew its beat; and after spending the night in the Sennhütte, they meant to go out next day to stalk it. So he continued his way in silence.

They had been several hours on the road, when a strong daring-looking fellow came towards them from above, stood still suddenly, and examined them with an angry gaze. He could scarcely have been twenty-four years of age, wore a very faded old jacket, a weather-beaten little hat with a long cock's-feather; the strong bare knees showed their brownness as they looked out from the leather breeches and woollen socks, and his coarse shirt left neck and chest uncovered. He stood now leaning on his tall mountain stick in the middle of the way with almost sarcastic obstinacy, as though he were ruler here, and did not turn a step aside when the dandy stranger approached. The bold fellow pleased him. He looked confidingly at him, nodded, and said,

‘God greet you! How far is it from here to the Regenalm?’

The youth's sharp-cut mouth fell, he bit his lips together as though he preferred to swallow the answer.

‘To the Regenalm?’ he repeated at length,

with a scornful glance at the stranger's costume. 'Do you suppose it is carnival up there?'

He raised his stick, and struck it against a stone, as if to test the power of the sharp iron point.

'Seppi,' said the hunter-boy, 'stand aside at once, or I will tell the ranger you know what!'

The other laughed.

'Talk what stuff you please,' said he. 'I fear no devil, least of all such a creature as you, who carries the gun for such a monkey. God be with you, Phrygius!'

And with another laugh he struck aside among the firs, and disappeared in a hollow. The other two looked after him.

'Who is that rude fellow?' asked the baron.

'Seppi from Thiereck, your honour,' answered the boy, staring down into the hollow, as if a wounded deer had escaped that way. 'The ranger has had his eye on him for some time; for he poaches about dangerously, just as he feels inclined. Formerly, when his mother still lived, he kept quieter; now he carries on in broad daylight. Resei on the Regenalm is his sweetheart. That is why he pricked up his ears when your honour asked the way there. And another thing that did not please him was that you wear the blackcock feather in front instead of behind. When any of the people wear it so, it means he

wants to pick a quarrel, and every one is ready to fall upon him. I will not answer for it that Sepp may not want to pick a quarrel with your honour, although he has gone out of your way now.'

'What can he do to me?' said the young man calmly. 'He has not even a gun.'

'O yes, he has, sir; only you did not see it. He has one to screw. He carries the butt-end in his pouch, and the barrel, which is quite short, in his jacket-pocket. When he wants to shoot, he can put it together in a second. But if the game-keeper gets hold of him he must give it up, and then he will be locked up for several weeks.'

'And what did you threaten to tell the ranger about him, Phrygius?'

'I saw him last Saturday with a chamois in the Ofenthal, just by the place where the king shoots. He was going down to the Hintersee. If his mother were not my godmother, I believe he would have shot me, he was so furious at my meeting him. I promised him to keep silence. But he has no peace in his conscience.'

'Is he poor, that he must go poaching?'

'He might live quite comfortably if he did not gamble and act the grand gentleman at every kermess and shooting-match. But he thinks it must be so; and for that his box-making does not bring him in enough. His mother, who kept things together a bit, is no longer there; he has

sold his cows, is in debt for his house. Where is he to get something from? Resei does not care about him any more either; I heard myself how she said to her friend that she would not take a good-for-nothing and poacher. That makes him twice as fierce and furious, and he would like to shoot down every one. But your honour need not be afraid. I will take care, with the gun behind you. In another hour we shall be at the huts.'

After this conversation they were silent again, and the more persistently since the last steep bit of road required firm breath. When they passed out of the shade of the wood, and now looked up at the free green slopes of the last height, the baron again stood still, and fixed his eyes on a spot high up on the hill, where something dark was moving backwards and forwards before the clear sky. The boy told him that it was a seesaw, on which the cow-girls sometimes amused themselves. Continuing his way, he soon heard the shrill cry with which the quick-sighted girls welcomed him from a distance. But when he reached the top, had climbed the highest ridge, and approached the seesaw, he felt a cold shudder at the sight of this dangerous game. Hard by the steep precipice a stake of about a man's height had been driven into the ground, and over it lay the long board of the seesaw, and moved backwards and forwards. At each end, holding on to a short peg, sat one of the *Sennerinnen* astride,

with her legs crossed. Up and down they flew, while the ends of their black headdresses fluttered, and the ground shook when they struck on it with all their weight, to fly up next moment high over the precipice, into which the least swerve of the pole must have thrown them. As they hung in mid-air, nodding and laughing welcome to the strange hunter, and waving their hands high in the air, while their white teeth shone, the spectator forgot all his fear, and enjoyed the sight of the fresh youth that smiled on him here in the wilderness, like a bunch of Alpine roses on the steep rocky wall.

At last the two girls grew tired of their game, and stopped. In an instant they were off the swing, for Phrygius helped them, and greeted the new arrival kindly, who asked for their hospitality. Now, for the first time, he was able to look around from the height on which he stood, and thought himself well repaid for this troublesome ascent. On the crest of the Watzmann fresh snow had fallen ; the 'Stony Sea' shone softly in the evening red, and the glittering ice-mantle of the Alm sparkled in it like a large diamond among the crown-jewels of the vast Alpine domain. The Alm descended to the south in a gentle slope ; here and there a large rocky fragment overgrown with Alpine roses looked out from the depth, or a thicket of dark-green dwarf-pines, between which the cows were

grazing. Lower down towards the Regenalm firs and some larches reappeared.

The four wended their way in this direction, in such conversation as hunters, in coarse or fine shoes, generally carry on with *Sennerinnen*. The taller and handsomer of the girls was that *Resei* whom *Phrygius* had mentioned in connection with the poacher. The other, *Genoveva*, or *Vefa*, was inferior to her companion in beauty, but by no means in good-humour. They both wore close-fitting bodices, and over them tight brown-woollen jackets trimmed with red stripes and a number of coloured glass buttons. They had woollen socks from their ankle to the knee. *Resei* was barefooted, and *Vefa* wore heavy wooden shoes. Both inhabited a large *Sennhütte* by the *Regen*, divided by a partition-wall into two equal parts, so that each of the girls had her own domain of dairy, cellar, hearth, and stable for the cattle. There they had already spent several weeks, and the time was approaching when they were to drive off with the well-fed herds back to the peasants who had intrusted them with their cattle.

All this they told the baron on the way from the seesaw to their hut. Meantime the twilight was beginning to envelope them, and it was growing cold on this exposed height. The 'Stony Sea' shimmered gray, the snowy crest of the *Watzmann* stood out in spectral paleness in the colourless air, and beyond, from the invisible basin of

the Obersee a white mist rose slowly. Scarcely a quarter of an hour later, although moving with apparent slowness, it had covered the whole horizon, and hung like a tough spider's web even round the firs and dwarf-pines on the Alm, so that the hunters and girls reached the hut only just in time.

Within they already found a fire on the ground opposite the door. An old woodcutter sat there cooking his evening meal in Resei's frying-pan. Two Sennerinnen and a cowboy from the neighbouring Alm had also looked in to have an hour's chat.

There were rather close quarters round the blackened hearth, and the two little seats were not sufficient. Phrygius crouched down next the cowboy on the threshold of the dairy; the baron had a warm seat between Vefa and one of the strange girls; Resei was going backwards and forwards, preparing in haste a real mountain *Schmarren* for her guests. But close quarters are no hindrance to coziness. Soon laughing and giggling began in the merry circle. The tin spoons clattered; the baron did justice to a wooden bowl full of sweet milk, into which Vefa threw large bits of bread. Phrygius smoked a cigar that the baron had given him with all a novice's satisfaction. The old woodcutter, who at first had also been somewhat mistrustful of the stranger, became so cheerful from

the effects of the hunting-flask out of which he was allowed to drink, that he began to turn out his endless store of ancient songs, accompanied by the monotonous music of an old zither; while the cow-girls often joined in, laughing and jogging each other's elbows.

The baron slung his gun across his shoulder, and stepped after Resei out into the morning mist. She wanted to show him his way as far as the beat which Phrygius had described to her. From the Regenalm a gentle beautifully-rounded slope descends between the mountain-peaks to the west, until it sinks in steeper craggy cliffs into the lake. The ground is covered with soft grass, tolerably free from stones; a sparse copse of beautiful maples extends through the whole length of the hollow, which is called, after it, the Maple Valley. Here the stag driven by Phrygius was to pass between the trees.

‘Hunter’s luck to you!’ said the girl, as she stood still at the entrance to the Maple Valley.

He also stood still and looked back. There lay the huts peacefully in the first light of the rising sun, while it was only just dawn in the hollow. The cows had dispersed. Vefa’s form could be distinguished on a piece of rock, and she sent a strong *jodel* cry across to them.

‘That will not drive the game away,’ said Resei.

‘They are accustomed to it. Sometimes the stags come to us so trustfully that we could touch them. But then there must be no hunter near, or they would soon scent him.’

She seemed to have something else on her mind, for she hesitated to go.

‘Listen,’ said she at length. ‘It may be that Sepp will try to play a trick to spoil your hunt. He will scarcely dare do more. But if you meet him, do not speak an angry word to him, whatever he may do, or he will do what he might repent. And now, once more, hunter’s luck to you!’

She left him standing, and again returned to her hut, and he gazed after her strong and yet graceful form. He did not fear Sepp, for he bore his protecting weapon, and knew himself to be quick and strong. Besides, in this late season the maple-wood was scarcely dense enough for an ambush, nor did he fear one much from this very straightforward fellow. So he loaded his gun, and now began creeping cautiously among the stems to seek a convenient station. A young deer crossed his path, a few chamois hastened past in quick flight on the top of the ridge, and sent down stones into the valley. This showed him that his Phrygius must be approaching. But still the hero of the day—the stag—kept him waiting. The hunter could plainly distinguish his track on the dry leaves; and as he came to an open space which it

crossed, he took up his station between two little fir-trees, on whose roots lay a mossy stone. There he crouched down behind the stems, between which he could see and aim very well. All around him not a creature stirred, except the birds, who now and then buzzed out from the branches, and always made the watcher's heart beat faster, as though they proclaimed the approach of the expected stag.

Gradually, amid watching and listening, he sank into a pleasant daydream. He planned out for himself how he would set to work this evening to please Resei. He laid his gun down beside him, and removed the traces of his hay-bed from his clothing. Meantime the sun was slowly rising behind the ridge, and pouring a full light into the Maple Valley. The hunter wore a ruby on his finger ; he let it play in the sun, and felt, as he looked at his image in the bright blade of his new hunting-knife, that he was completely irresistible, the handsomest, most distinguished, and richest man for many miles around. How could he fail in anything?

Just as he had finished his toilette, he heard a rustling of dead branches close by, and saw the stag breaking forth on a side to which the track had not pointed. He was not running, but looking round wildly—a strong royal stag, quite black, with shaggy breast, and spreading sharp-pointed branches. One moment he stood in the clearing, scenting,

with head erect, and emitting a low murmuring noise. The next moment he became aware of the man behind the fir ; his black eye gave the hunter one hasty glance, then he turned round with a mighty spring, and stormed into the wood up the slope. But behind him sounded two reports one after another, and the certain tokens of a hasty flight showed the startled hunter that he had had more luck than prudence, and had certainly hit the animal. Eagerly he sprang up, and rushed after the fugitive into the forest, intent now only on discovering the stag's blood. With strong steps he followed in that direction, and a cry of joy escaped from him when he perceived on a piece of bare rock the red track, although it was almost immediately after lost among grass and tall ferns. He stood still for one moment and considered whether he should wait for Phrygius. But after his contemptible beginning, he felt the desire doubly strong to seek the stag alone, whom he expected to find dead. So he carefully reloaded both barrels of his gun, and continued to climb the difficult path between cliffs, bushes, and underwood, from time to time encouraged by meeting the bloody track.

He had soon climbed so far up the mountain that he could look down on to the trees in the Maple Valley, and see along the whole length of the hollow. Two or three times he thought he saw his hunting-boy's gray jacket appear between

the branches ; and now he also heard a whistle, but further in the distance. Without letting himself be detained, he climbed on along the wild slope, up which the wounded stag had hurried, following the track which shone plainly in bright red drops on the gray rock, and the perspiration stood on his forehead from the difficult pursuit. For still the warm south wind was blowing up from the valley, which, even had the sun not been rising higher in the heavens, would have increased a wanderer's difficulties. Now he had climbed the ridge of the mountains, and the view opened out on to the blue lake below and the walls of the giant Watzmann. But close by the huntsman's feet lay another craggy wilderness of immense blocks, here and there overgrown with Alpine roses. A novice could not be blamed for stopping here to take breath and consider what he should do next. Now he did repent that he had not first waited for his able hunting companion. He listened to hear whether he might not have climbed after him of his own accord ; and in truth he fancied he heard, at no great distance, the sound of nailed boots on the hard rock.

‘Phrygius !’ he called three times. Not a sound in answer. But should he turn back now, while there in the bright sun lay the red track, whose drops were getting bigger and bigger ? ‘Forward !’ exclaimed he, with determination, and again began

to pursue the uncertain zigzag course of the fugitive over the loose stones that rolled beneath his steps fast and noisily down into the abyss.

Suddenly he saw a mighty vulture flying from the lake, shooting through the steel-blue air. Now it stopped just above the cliff, its glance firmly fixed on one spot. There could be no doubt, there, only fifty paces from the baron, behind the sheltering rock that rose sheer from among the stones, the stag had stopped, and was perhaps already dead. While the huntsman rejoiced in the auspicious omen, its motionless hovering roused him to attempt a new aim. The barrel of his gun was loaded with a bullet. But the bird was as still as the black spot in the target, and if the one ball failed, there still remained the other for the stag. He calmly took aim, shot, and with convulsive wings the vulture fell out of the air. At the same moment the mighty head of the stag rose from behind the rock, and the wounded creature stood opposite its enemy, in the wild mountain solitude, prepared for a last struggle. He felt his heart beating. Next him he saw the precipice, where there was no escape either up or down. He knew by the animal's proud bearing that the shot had only wounded its thigh, but had not reached the seat of life. The savage creature had already bent its antlers for the attack; everything depended on one last bullet; but with cool hand the hunter

raised the gun to his cheek, aimed just as the stag was storming against him, and would have been sure of his shot, when his gun treacherously failed him, and only the cap went off. A sudden shudder overcame the defenceless man. He saw the raging beast springing towards him, and had only sufficient consciousness to commend his soul to God and throw himself down, so that the enemy might possibly rush over him, when—hark !—behind him sounded a shot ; and when he started up and looked round he saw, twenty paces from him, the falling stag, who struck down the low dwarf pines, and in his death-struggle threw down sand and stones into the abyss with the points of his antlers.

Instantly the baron sprang to his feet saved, and turned towards the ridge of the mountain, whence help in need had come. ‘Phrygius!’ exclaimed he, for his eyes were dazzled, and he did not immediately recognise the form that stood calmly among the crags. Now it moved. The marksman opposite threw the discharged blunderbuss over his shoulder and turned round, slowly reascending the height. Not till then did the baron see that it was no other than Sepp from Thiereck. But before he could realise how it had all come about, his suspicious deliverer had disappeared on the other side of the ridge, and he was left alone with the dead stag.

A quarter of an hour later, when Phrygius

came breathlessly to the spot, he found the baron plunged in reverie and mentally exhausted, sitting on a stone and staring into the animal's breast-wound, so that he at first thought the gentleman must be asleep with his eyes open. He had to call him several times before he stirred.

'I am glad,' said the honest fellow, 'that your honour has all your limbs left you. For I heard Sepp's shot, that sounds different from your twin barrels. I turned hot all over; for I know well enough that when Sepp is in a passion, he could aim at the Lord himself; and directly after, when I met him there where the trees begin, he looked at me so strangely, that I could say nothing to him but, "Sepp, have you seen the baron?" Then he pointed back over the ridge with his hand, and said, "He has shot a stag and a vulture." And with that he went his way. But, sir, it is a glorious stag, and a beautiful shot. And where is the vulture?'

The baron pointed to the rock, from which Phrygius soon brought the stately bird. He tied it on to the gun, threw it across his back, and said,

'We will fetch the stag this afternoon; he will never get up any more. But what was that about Sepp, sir? What did he shoot at? And how is it that I only heard you shoot once up here?'

'I will tell you some other time,' said the hunter, rising. 'Where is Sepp gone?'

'I cannot tell. No one knows his ways.'

GABORIAU.

BORN IN SAUJON, 1835; DIED OCT. 1, 1873.

GABORIAU.

IT surely is not derogatory to a novelist to say of him that his novels amuse and captivate the reader while perusing his pages, and that the spell once broken, the mystery unravelled, the works leave little residue in our memory. The primary condition of a novel is that it should amuse, while away an idle hour, or divert the current of pressing thoughts and anxieties. Gaboriau eminently fulfils these demands. He is a writer whom it is as difficult to put aside as Wilkie Collins at his best ; his romances are as enthralling as the famous *Woman in White*. Yet, once put aside for a time, it would be as difficult to remember all their plots and counterplots, the mysteries and intricacies, as those of that wonderful work. All Gaboriau's stories are of one kind. They are police novels of elaborate construction, with plots cleverly planned and dexterously developed. Easily read, these books can by no means have been as easily written. They bear all the marks of the most careful and thoughtful composition. Their analysis reveals the most subtle weaving of a fictitious thread ; not a word, not an

incident, is carelessly introduced—all have their purpose, their ultimate end, to fulfil. At first simple, the threads of narrative after a while cross and intercross; yet we never become confused, the whole plot is too admirably lucid in the author's mind to be presented otherwise than clearly. Gaboriau is a master of logical deduction, he understands the art of reasoning; an admirer has well said of his books that they are not romances but logical treatises! For logical analysis he is probably unsurpassed; and it is no exaggeration when a French critic says of him that he is 'one of the writers of our time who has best linked effects to their causes, who has clearly proved the errors and dangers possible in deduction, the sophisms of reasoning, the deviations in the normal order of proofs.' His works are greatly admired by lawyers as examples of acute ratiocination and remarkable perspicuity, and they are indeed worthy the attention of all members of that profession. They show how difficult are the paths of justice; how even the most specious inferences from acknowledged circumstances may yet be far from the truth, that to pronounce as to the guilt or innocence of a human soul is a task often beyond human powers.

The French, who greatly admire the works of E. A. Poe, of which they possess an excellent translation from no less able a pen than that of Baudelaire, claim for Gaboriau that he is a French

Poe. It seems, indeed, that Gaboriau himself acknowledged that the perusal of Poe's tales in his extreme youth inflamed his imagination, and incited him to follow in his footsteps. But he has been something beyond a servile imitator. Gaboriau's stories are not merely mysteries of crime, mathematically handled, in which the author's attention is solely devoted to unravelling the problem: they deal with real flesh-and-blood personages, are taken out of real life; the mysteries are only such as are created by crime—he does not love mystery for its own sake. Where the two authors most resemble each other is in their passion for analysis. The description given by Poe of his amateur detective in 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' might be applied, word for word, to both himself and Gaboriau: 'The analytical faculties are always to their possessor, when inordinately possessed, a source of the liveliest enjoyment. As the strong man exults in his physical ability, delighting in such exercises as call his muscles into action, so glories the analyst in that mental activity which *disentangles*. He derives pleasure from even the most trivial occupations bringing his talent into play. He is fond of enigmas, of conundrums, of hieroglyphics, exhibiting in his solution of each a degree of acumen which appears to the ordinary comprehension preternatural. His results, brought about by the very soul and essence of method,

have, in truth, the whole air of intuition.' These words too apply with force to Gaboriau's amateur detective Tabaret in *L'Affaire Lerouge*, a figure that has probably been suggested by Poe's crime-loving hero.

Gaboriau has left several such criminal novels, of which the most notable are *L'Affaire Lerouge*, *Le Crime d'Orcival*, *Le Dossier No. 113*, *Monsieur Lecoq*, and *La Corde au Cou*. He exhibits in all a wonderful capacity for inventing problems that seem insoluble, and for varying the nature and circumstances of the crimes committed. Each novel is excellent in its way, and it is almost invidious to specialise. But perhaps the most remarkable and thrilling are *Monsieur Lecoq* and *L'Affaire Lerouge*. The former deals with the history of an ambitious detective, who is anxious to rise in his profession, and hopes to do so by unravelling a mystery. A strange murder takes place in Paris, in which no one discovers anything extraordinary except himself; and he suspects that there is a great personage connected with it, and great interests involved. The whole first volume is occupied with his endeavours to prove his conjecture, which ultimately is found to be correct.

L'Affaire Lerouge opens with the statement that an old woman is found murdered in her cottage. The perpetrator of the crime is unknown, and his discovery occupies the book. Side by side with this

runs a second narrative, which, at first existing independently, becomes unexpectedly interwoven with the former. The whole is evolved so skilfully, our interest in the various personages is so fully aroused, that it is impossible to put aside the book until we have discovered whether the man who is accused has really perpetrated the crime, all indications pointing irrefragably to that conclusion. And yet he has not committed it ; and one of the most subtle touches in the whole is the acumen displayed by an amateur detective, who sees in the fact that the accused cannot account for himself during the night of the crime a proof of his innocence, rather than what, to superficial observers, would be a damnatory proof of his guilt.

From *L'Affaire Lerouge* we extract the opening scene. Even if Gaboriau's novels had no other claim upon the interest of English readers, they would be worth perusal as faithful pictures of French legal procedure, with its mode, so contrary to ours, of administering criminal law.

The Amateur Detective.

The head of the police was no other than the celebrated Gévrol, who will not fail to play an important part in the drama of our nephews. He is unquestionably an able man ; but he lacks perseverance, and he sometimes allows himself to be

blinded by the most incredible obstinacy. If he loses a track, he cannot make up his mind to confess it, even less to retrace his steps. On the other hand, he is audacious and cool, and has never hesitated to confront the most dangerous criminals.

But his specialty, his glory, his triumph, is a memory for faces—so extraordinary as to exceed the limits of the credible. If he has seen a face for five minutes, it is done: the face is marked down. Everywhere, at any time, he will recognise it. The most impossible places, the most unlikely circumstances, the most incredible disguises, will not put him off the track. He says the reason is that in a man he only sees, only looks at, the eyes. He recognises the glance, without troubling himself about the features.

His experience was tested a few months ago at Poissy. Three prisoners were draped under coverings in such a manner as to hide their figure; before their faces was put a thick veil, with holes for the eyes, and in this condition they were brought before Gévrol.

Without the slightest hesitation he recognised three of his customers, and named them.

Was it chance alone that helped him?

Gévrol's aide-de-camp on this day was a former convict, who had made his peace with the law,—a clever fellow at his trade, as sharp as a needle, and

jealous of his chief, whom he considered of mediocre ability. He was called Lecoq.

The justice of the peace, who began to feel his responsibility weigh upon him, welcomed the investigating judge* and his two agents as his deliverers. He quickly related the facts, and read his deposition.

‘You have acted very well, sir,’ said the judge. ‘All this is very clear ; only there is one circumstance that you have forgotten.’

‘Which, sir?’ asked the justice.

‘Which day was the Widow Lerouge seen for the last time, and at what hour?’

‘I was coming to that, sir. She was seen on the evening of Shrove Tuesday, at twenty minutes past five. She was returning from Bougival with a basket of provisions.’

‘You are quite sure of the time, sir?’ asked Gévrol.

‘Quite ; and this is why. The two witnesses whose testimony convinces me—the woman Teller and a cooper, who live close by here—were getting out of the tramway-car which leaves Marly

* The investigating judge (*juge d'instruction*) acts as a kind of public prosecutor, and makes inquiries in secret which may lead to the discovery of a criminal. He has a right to summon any witness whose testimony may be of use, and he may also arrest on suspicion any one whom he supposes to be guilty. The word in no way corresponds to the English notion of a judge.

once an hour, when they saw the Widow Lerouge in the cross-road. They hurried on to catch her up, talked to her, and only left her at her own door.'

'And what had she in her basket?' asked the judge.

'The witnesses do not know. They only know that she was carrying two bottles of wine and a quart of brandy. She complained of headache, and said that, although it was customary to enjoy oneself on Shrove Tuesday, she should go to bed.'

'Ah, well,' exclaimed the chief of the police, 'I know where to look now.'

'You think so?' asked M. Daburon.

'Parbleu! it is clear enough. The matter is to find the big brown fellow in the blouse. The brandy and the wine were destined for him. The widow expected him to supper. He came, this amiable gallant.'

'O, but,' insinuated the brigadier indignantly, 'she was very ugly and dreadfully old!'

Gévrol gave the honest policeman a knowing look, and said,

'Let me tell you, brigadier, that a woman who has money is always young and pretty if she likes.'

'Perhaps there may be something in that,' said the judge; 'but that is not what strikes me most. It is rather those words of the Widow Lerouge: "If I wanted more money I should have it."'

‘That is also what aroused my attention,’ confirmed the justice of the peace.

But Gévrol no longer took the trouble to listen. He had his clue. He examined carefully all the nooks and corners of the room. Suddenly he turned again to the justice.

‘I have it!’ exclaimed he. ‘Was it not on Tuesday that the weather changed? It had been freezing for a fortnight, and on Tuesday it rained. At what time did the rain begin?’

‘At half-past nine,’ answered the brigadier. ‘I was coming from supper, and going to take a turn at the balls, when I was overtaken by a shower opposite the Rue des Pêcheurs. In less than ten minutes there was half an inch of water in the street.’

‘Very good,’ said Gévrol. ‘Then if the man came after half-past nine his boots must have been covered with mud; if not he must have come before. You must have been able to see that, since the floor is polished. Were there any footmarks, sir?’

‘I must confess that we did not think about that.’

‘Ah,’ said the police-agent, in a tone of vexation, ‘that is a pity.’

‘Wait a moment,’ said the justice; ‘there is still time to look, not in this room, but in the next. We have not moved a thing there. My steps and the brigadier’s can easily be distinguished. Come.’

As the justice opened the door into the other room, Gévrol stopped him.

‘I will ask you, sir,’ said he, ‘to allow me to examine everything before any one enters. It is of importance to me.’

‘Certainly,’ said M. Daburon.

Gévrol entered first, and all behind him stopped on the threshold. Thus they took in at a glance the scene of the crime.

As the justice had said, everything appeared to have been turned upside down by some madman.

In the middle of the room a table was laid. A fine snow-white tablecloth covered it. Upon it stood a beautiful cut-glass goblet, a knife, and a china plate. There was also a bottle of wine almost untouched, and a bottle of brandy, from which about five or six little glasses had been drunk.

On the right, along the wall, stood two handsome walnut-wood cupboards with wrought locks, one on each side of the window. Both were empty, and their contents lay strewn about over the whole floor. They were clothes and linen, unfolded, thrown about and tumbled.

At the end of the room, near the fireplace, a large wall-cupboard, containing table-utensils, stood open. On the other side of the fireplace an old writing-table, with a marble top, had been forced open, broken to pieces, and doubtless searched in

its smallest cracks. The desk had been torn off, and hung on one hinge; the drawers had been pulled out and thrown on the ground. And on the left, the bed had been entirely undone and overhauled. Even the straw had been pulled out of the mattress.

‘Not the faintest mark!’ muttered Gévrol, annoyed. ‘He must have come before half-past nine o’clock. We may go in now without any objection.’

He went in, and walked straight up to the corpse of the Widow Lerouge, and knelt down next it.

‘There is no denying it,’ muttered he; ‘it is neatly done. The murderer is no mere apprentice.’

Then looking about him to right and left,

‘O, O!’ continued he, ‘the poor thing was just cooking when the knock came. There is her saucepan on the ground, and her ham and eggs. The brute had not the patience to wait for his dinner. The gentleman was in a hurry; he gave the blow with an empty stomach. So that he cannot even urge in his excuse the merriment caused by the wine.’

‘It is plain,’ said the justice of the peace to the judge, ‘that theft was the motive of the crime.’

‘It is probable,’ said Gévrol slyly. ‘It must be for that reason that we do not see a trace of silver on the table.’

‘See, here are pieces of gold in this drawer!’ exclaimed Lecoq, who was also rummaging. ‘Here are 320 francs!’

‘Well, I never!’ exclaimed Gévrol, somewhat disconcerted.

But he soon recovered from his surprise, and continued,

‘He must have forgotten them; I have heard of stranger cases than that. I have seen an assassin who, when he had accomplished the murder, lost his head so completely, that he no longer remembered what he had come for, and ran away without taking anything. Our friend may have been overcome. Who knows whether he may not have been disturbed? Some one may have knocked at the door. What leads me to think that is, that the scoundrel did not leave the candle burning; he took the trouble to blow it out.’

‘Bah!’ said Lecoq, ‘that does not prove anything. Perhaps he was an economical and careful man.’

The two agents continued their investigations all through the house; but the most minute search failed to reveal anything. Not a convicting circumstance, not the slightest indication which could serve as mark or starting-point. Even all the Widow Lerouge’s papers—if she had any—had disappeared. Not a letter was discovered, not a scrap of paper—nothing.

From time to time Gévrol stopped to swear or to grumble.

‘O, it was neatly done! I call that work done in A 1 style. The scoundrel has some skill.’

‘Well, sirs?’ at length asked the judge.

‘We must begin again, sir,’ replied Gévrol; ‘the game is where it stood. The rascal had taken every precaution with the greatest care. But I will catch him yet. Before this evening I will have a dozen men about the country. Besides, we are sure of getting him. He has carried off silver and jewels. He is lost.’

‘But in spite of all that,’ said M. Daburon, ‘we are no further than we were this morning.’

‘By Jove! we do what we can,’ grumbled Gévrol.

‘I say,’ said Lecoq, in a half whisper, ‘why is not Father Bring-to-light here?’

‘What could he do more than we?’ objected Gévrol, with a furious glance at his subordinate officer.

Lecoq bent his head down, and did not breathe another word, inwardly delighted to have wounded his superior’s feelings.

‘Who is this Father Bring-to-light?’ asked the judge; ‘it seems to me I must have heard his name somewhere.’

‘He is a sharp man,’ exclaimed Lecoq.

‘He was formerly employed at the Mont de

Piété,' added Gévrol—' a rich old man, whose real name is Tabaret. He acts as detective for his own amusement.'

'And to add to his fortune,' put in the justice.

'Not he!' answered Lecoq; 'no fear of that. It is so entirely for glory that he labours, that he is often out of pocket by it. Why, it is an amusement for him! We call him Bring-to-light among ourselves, because of a sentence that he is always repeating. O, he is great, that old mastiff! It was he who, in that affair about the banker's wife, you know, guessed that the woman had robbed herself, and proved it.'

'That is true,' broke in Gévrol sharply. 'It was also he who almost cut the throat of that poor Derème, the little tailor, who was accused of killing his wife—a good-for-nothing—and who was innocent.'

'We are wasting our time, gentlemen,' interrupted the judge. And turning to Lecoq: 'Go,' said he, 'and bring me Father Tabaret. I have often heard him spoken of; I shall not be sorry to see him at work.'

Lecoq ran off: Gévrol was seriously annoyed.

'Sir,' said he to the judge, 'you have certainly a right to employ the services of whomever you please, but—'

'Do not be vexed, M. Gévrol,' broke in M.

Daburon. 'Our acquaintance is not of yesterday. I know what you are worth, only to-day we are of entirely different opinion. You cling obstinately to your dark man, while I am convinced that you are not on the track.'

'I believe I am right,' answered the head of the police, 'and I hope to prove it to you. I will find the scoundrel, whoever he may be.'

'I ask no more.'

'Only, if you would allow me to give you—what shall I say, without being disrespectful?—some advice.'

'Speak.'

'Well, I would ask you to mistrust Father Tabaret.'

'Indeed! and why?'

'Because the man is too excitable. He acts the part of detective for the sake of success, just as much as an author. And as he is vainer than a peacock, he is apt to be carried away, to jump at conclusions. The moment he comes into the presence of a crime—like the one to-day, for instance—he pretends to explain everything on the spot; and, in truth, he invents some story which exactly suits the situation. He pretends, from a single fact, to be able to build up all the scenes of the assassination, like that learned man who could build up extinct animals from a single bone. Sometimes he guesses rightly, but often he is mistaken. Thus, in that

affair of the tailor, that unfortunate Derème, without me—'

'Thank you for your advice,' broke in M. Daburon. 'I shall make use of it. Now,' continued he, turning to the justice of the peace, 'we must try, at whatever cost, to discover from what part this Widow Lerouge came.'

The troop of witnesses, led by the brigadier of police, began once more to defile before the judge.

But no new facts came to light.

* * * * *

He was interrupted by Lecoq, who came in quite out of breath.

'Here is Father Tabaret,' said he. 'I met him as he was just going out. What a man! He would not even wait for the train to start: he gave, I don't know how much, to a coachman, and we have got here in fifty minutes—got ahead of the railway!'

Almost at the same moment there appeared on the threshold a man whose appearance, it must be confessed, by no means corresponded to the idea one might form of a detective for honour and glory.

He was about sixty, and did not seem to carry his years very lightly. Short, thin, and a little bent, he leaned on a thick stick with a carved ivory head.

His round face had that expression of perpetual astonishment mixed with alarm that has made the fortune of two Palais Royal comedians. He was

carefully shaved, had a very short chin, thick good-humoured lips, and his nose disagreeably turned up like the bell of some instruments of M. Sax.

His eyes of a dull gray, small, with red rims, said absolutely nothing; but they were wearying by their unendurable mobility. A few straight hairs shaded his forehead, retreating like a greyhound's, and did not succeed in hiding two large gaping ears standing out a long way from the head.

He was very comfortably dressed, as clean as a new shoe, displaying linen of a dazzling whiteness, and wearing silk gloves and gaiters. A long chain of very massive gold, of detestable taste, surrounded his neck three times, and fell in cascades into his waistcoat-pocket.

Father Tabaret, *alias* Bring-to-light, bowed to the ground in the doorway, bending his old back into a bow. In the humblest of voices, he asked,

‘Has the judge condescended to send for me?’

‘Yes,’ answered M. Daburon; and aside to himself he said, ‘If that is an able man, at any rate he does not look like it.’

‘I am here,’ continued the man, ‘quite at the service of Justice.’

‘The matter is,’ said the judge, ‘to see whether you, more fortunate than we have been, may succeed in discovering some token which may put us

on the murderer's track. The matter shall be explained to you.'

'O, I know enough about it,' interrupted Father Tabaret; 'Lecoq told me the whole thing on our way, quite as much as I need.'

'Yet—' began the justice of the peace.

'Only trust to me, sir. I like to act without instructions, so as to be more sure of my own impressions. When one knows other people's opinions, one is apt to be influenced against one's will, so that— Well, I will begin my search with Lecoq.'

While he was speaking, his little gray eyes kindled and lighted up like a carbuncle. His face reflected inward delight, and even his wrinkles seemed to laugh. He had drawn himself up, and, with almost a light step, he hastened into the second room.

He remained there about half an hour and then ran out. He returned to it, went out again; again reappeared, and went away again at once. The judges could not help noticing in him that restless and unquiet anxiety of a dog who is on the hunt. Even his trumpet-like nose was moving as though to breathe-in some subtle emanation from the murderer. As he came and went, he talked aloud, and gesticulated, apostrophised himself, called himself names, gave little cries of triumph, or encouraged himself. He did not leave Lecoq one moment's

peace. He needed this or that or some other thing. He asked for pencil and paper, then he wanted a spade. Presently he called for some plaster, some water, and a bottle of oil.

After more than an hour, the judge, who was beginning to grow impatient, inquired what had become of his volunteer.

‘He is on the road,’ answered the brigadier, lying face downwards in the mud, and he is mixing some plaster in a plate. He says he has almost finished and will come back directly.’

In reality he came back almost immediately—joyous, triumphant, looking twenty years younger.

Lecoq followed him, carrying a large basket with the greatest care.

‘I have it,’ said he to the judge; ‘it is complete. It is brought to light now, and as plain as daylight. Lecoq, my boy, put the basket on the table.’

‘Speak, M. Tabaret,’ said the judge.

The man had emptied the contents of his basket on to the table—a large lump of clay, several large sheets of paper, and three or four little pieces of still wet plaster. Standing before this table, he looked almost grotesque, strikingly resembling those gentlemen who, on the public places, perform juggling tricks with nutmegs and the pence of the public. His dress had suffered considerably; he was almost covered with mud.

‘I commence,’ said he, in a voice almost conceitedly modest. ‘The theft is of no account in the crime that we are considering.’

‘No, on the contrary,’ muttered Gévrol.

‘I will prove it,’ continued Father Tabaret, ‘by evidence. I will also presently give my humble opinion on the manner of the murder. Well, the murderer came here before half-past nine—that is to say, before the rain. Like M. Gévrol, I also found no muddy footprints; but under the table, on the spot where the murderer’s feet must have rested, I have found traces of dust. So we are quite certain now about the time. The Widow Lerouge did not at all expect the comer. She had begun to undress, and was just winding up her cuckoo-clock, when this person knocked.’

‘What minute details!’ said the justice of the peace.

‘They are easy to verify,’ replied the voluntary detective. ‘Examine this clock above the writing-table. It is one of those that go for fourteen or fifteen hours, not more, as I have ascertained. Then it is more than probable—it is certain—that the widow wound it up in the evening before going to bed. How is it that the clock stopped at five o’clock? Because she touched it. She must have begun to pull the chain when some one knocked. To prove what I have stated, I show you this chair below the clock; and on the stuff of the chair the

very plain mark of a foot. Then look at the victim's costume. She had taken off the body of her dress ; to open the door more quickly she did not put it on again, but hastily threw this old shawl over her shoulders.'

'Christi!' exclaimed the brigadier, whom this had evidently impressed.

'The widow,' continued Tabaret, 'knew the man who struck her. Her haste in opening the door leads us to suspect it ; what followed proves it. Thus the murderer was admitted without any difficulty. He is a young man, a little over the average height, elegantly dressed. That evening he wore a tall hat ; he had an umbrella, and was smoking a trabucos with a mouthpiece.'

'Indeed!' exclaimed Gévrol ; 'that is too strong !'

'Too strong, perhaps,' answered Father Tabaret ; 'in any case, it is the truth. If you are not particular as to detail, I cannot help it ; but, for my part, I am. I seek, and I find. Ah, it is too strong, you say ! Well, condescend to cast a glance at these lumps of wet plaster. They represent the heels of the murderer's boots, of which I found a most perfect imprint near the ditch in which the key was found. On these pieces of paper I have chalked the impression of the whole foot, which I could not carry away, as it is on sand. Look, the heel is high, the instep well marked, the sole little

and narrow—evidently the boot of a fine gentleman, whose foot is well cared for. Look there, all along the road, you will see it twice more. Then you will find it five times in the garden, into which no one has penetrated ; and this proves also that the murderer knocked not at the door, but at the shutter, under which a ray of light was visible. On entering the garden, my man jumped, to avoid a garden-bed ; the deeper imprint of the toe proves that. He made a spring of almost two yards with ease ; therefore he is nimble—that is to say, young.’

Father Tabaret spoke in a little clear penetrating voice. His eye moved from one to another of his hearers, watching their impressions.

‘Is it the hat that surprises you, M. Gévrol ?’ continued Father Tabaret. ‘Just look at the perfect circle traced on the marble of this writing-table, which was a little dusty. Is it because I fixed his height that you are surprised ? Be so good as to examine the top of these cupboards, and you will see that the murderer has passed his hands over it. Then he must be taller than I am. And do not say that he climbed on a chair ; for in that case he would have seen, and would not have been obliged to feel. Are you astonished at the umbrella ? This lump of earth retains an excellent impression, not only of the point, but also of the round of wood which holds the stuff. Is it the cigar that amazes

you? Here is the end of the trabucos, which I picked up among the ashes. Is the end of it bitten? Has it been moistened by saliva? No. Then whoever smoked it made use of a mouthpiece.'

Lecoq with difficulty restrained his enthusiastic admiration; noiselessly he struck his hands together. The justice of the peace was amazed, the judge seemed delighted. As a contrast, Gévrol's face became noticeably longer. As for the brigadier, he was petrified.

'Now,' continued Tabaret, 'listen attentively. Here is the young man introduced. How he explained his presence at that time I do not know. What is certain is, that he told the Widow Lerouge he had not dined. The worthy woman was delighted, and immediately set about preparing a meal. This meal was not for herself. In the cupboard I have found the remains of her dinner; she had eaten fish; the post-mortem will prove that. Besides, as you see, there is only one glass on the table, and one knife. But who is this young man? Evidently the widow considered him very much above her. In the cupboard there is a tablecloth that is still clean. Did she make use of it? No. For her guest she got out white linen, and her best. She meant this beautiful goblet for him; it was a present, no doubt. And finally, it is evident that she did not commonly make use of this ivory-handled knife.'

‘All that is exact,’ muttered the judge, ‘very exact.’

‘The young man is seated, then ; he has begun by drinking a glass of wine, while the widow was putting her saucepan on the fire. Then his courage began to fail him ; he asked for brandy, and drank about five little glasses full. After an inner conflict of about ten minutes—it must have taken this time to cook the ham and the eggs to this point—the young man rose, approached the widow, who was then bending down and leaning forward, and gave her two blows on the back. She did not die instantly. She half rose, and clutched the murderer’s hands. He also retreated, lifted her roughly, and threw her back into the position in which you see her. This short struggle is proved by the attitude of the corpse. Bent down and struck in the back, she would have fallen on her back. The murderer made use of a sharp fine weapon, which, if I am not much mistaken, was the sharpened end of a fencing-foil, with the button removed. Wiping his weapon on the victim’s skirt, he has left us this clue. The victim clutched his hands tightly ; but as he had not taken off his gray gloves—’

‘Why, that is a regular romance !’ exclaimed Gévrol.

‘Have you examined the Widow Lerouge’s nails, sir ? No. Well, go and look at them ; you

will tell me if I am mistaken. Well, the woman is dead. What does the murderer want? Is it money or valuables? No, no; a hundred times no! What he wants, what he seeks, what he requires, are papers that he knows to be in the victim's possession. To find them he turns over everything; he upsets the cupboards, unfolds the linen, breaks open the writing-table, to which he has not the key, and turns out the mattress.

'At last he finds them. And what do you think he does with these papers? He burns them, not in the fireplace, but in the little stove in the first room. Now his end is accomplished. What will he do? Fly, and carry off all the valuables he can find, to put the search on a wrong track and point to a robbery. Having seized everything, he wraps it in the napkin he was to use for his dinner, and blowing out the light, takes to flight, locks the door outside, and throws the key in a ditch. There you are!'

'M. Tabaret,' said the judge, 'your investigation is excellent, and I am convinced that you are in the right.'

'O,' exclaimed Lecoq, 'is he not splendid, my Papa Bring-to-light!'

'Gigantic!' said Gévrol, ironically overbidding him. 'Only I think that this worthy young man must have found a parcel, wrapped in a napkin that could be seen from a distance, rather a hindrance.'

‘Yes, and he did not carry it a hundred miles,’ replied Father Tabaret. ‘You may fancy that, to reach the station, he was not fool enough to make use of the tramcar. He went there on foot, by the shortest path along the river. Then, on reaching the Seine, unless he was much stronger than I fancy, his first care was to throw away this traitorous parcel.’

‘Do you think so, Papa Bring-to-light?’ asked Gévrol.

‘I would lay any wager, and the proof is that I have sent three men, under the conduct of a policeman, to search the Seine at the spot nearest here. If they find the parcel I have promised them a reward.’

‘Out of your own pocket, you excitable old fellow?’

‘Yes, M. Gévrol, out of my own pocket!’

‘And yet if this parcel could be found—’ muttered the judge.

At these words a policeman entered.

‘Here,’ said he, bringing a wet napkin containing silver, money, and jewels, ‘is what the men have found. They demand 100 francs, which have been promised them.’

Father Tabaret took out of his pocket-book a banknote, which he gave to the policeman.

‘Now,’ asked he, crushing Gévrol with a proud look, ‘what does the judge think?’

‘I believe that, thanks to your wonderful penetration, we shall succeed, and—’

He did not finish.* The doctor came to conduct the examination of the victim.

The doctor, having finished his repugnant task, could but confirm the assertions and conjectures of Father Tabaret. Thus he explained in the same way the position of the corpse. In his opinion also there must have been a struggle. Even round the victim’s neck he pointed out a hardly perceptible bluish ring, probably produced by extreme pressure of the murderer’s hands. Finally he stated that the Widow Lerouge had eaten about three hours before she was struck.

There only remained to collect some of the proofs, which might serve later on to confound the criminal.

Father Tabaret examined most carefully the dead woman’s nails, and with extreme precaution he succeeded in extracting some scraps of kid which had clung there. The largest of these fragments did not measure two millimètres ; but the colour could easily be distinguished. He also put aside the piece of skirt on which the murderer had wiped his weapon. This, with the parcel discovered in the Seine, and the several footprints carried off by Tabaret, was all that the murderer had left behind him.

It was nothing ; but this nothing was enormous

in M. Daburon's eyes, and he was very hopeful. The greatest obstacle to examinations of mysterious crimes is a mistake about the circumstances. If the search takes a wrong direction, it departs further and further from truth the more it is continued. Thanks to Father Tabaret, the judge was almost certain that he was not mistaken.

KELLER.

BORN IN ZURICH, JULY 19, 1819 ; STILL LIVING IN
THAT CITY.

KELLER.

GOTTFRIED KELLER and Jeremias Gotthelf are the two Switzers who have drawn their inspirations from their native soil. Gotthelf, who may be regarded as the father of the German peasant story since developed by Auerbach, treated of his countrymen in a somewhat jejune and realistic mode. Keller, on the contrary, has brought a curious and vigorous humour to bear upon his observations. The peculiarities, the angularities, the worldly shrewdness, mingled with rustic *naïveté* of the Swiss mountaineers, find a reflection in his pages; and being himself a Switzer of the Swiss, possessing all the merits and the failings of this people, he faithfully reproduces them in his works.

Keller was born in Zürich early in the century. His father was a carpenter, who died within a few years of his birth, leaving his wife and child but poorly provided for. The boy was in due course sent to one of the excellent Swiss schools where rich and poor are educated together, the latter gratuitously. He then went to Munich, with a view to learning art and becoming a landscape-painter.

Finding, however, that his pictures, though well-intentioned, were indifferently executed, he abandoned this project, and studied instead at Heidelberg and Berlin. During his student-years he published a volume of graceful verses, and his first prose work, *Der grüne Heinrich*. He then returned to Zürich, where he obtained a government post, which he held until quite recently. As a recreation after official work, he laboured at literature, and hence, as his leisure was limited and as he is a very slow careful workman, the number of his works is small. On the other hand, all that he has permitted to pass into print deserves this honour; everything he has written merits attention, and is original and excellent. A series of tales, published under the collective title of *The People of Seldwyla*, first made Keller's fame; for the *Grüne Heinrich* had been of such a peculiar character that it was 'caviare to the multitude.' Seldwyla is an imaginary town, intended to be typically Swiss. Our author tells us that it lies in a warm sunny valley, surrounded by forests and hills, and overshadowed by distant mountains. It still boasts its ancient fortifications, and is completely untouched by the march of civilisation—in fact, a very Sleepy Hollow. The commune is rich, the inhabitants are poor; politics are largely discussed, and at times religious fanaticism runs high. Cribbed within a narrow compass, the individuality of the

natives of this town is apt to be pronounced, and sometimes to develop into eccentricity and oddity. Being constantly thrown together, everybody knows everybody, and no concealment of affairs is possible. Hence all transactions, however naturally private, partake of something of a public character, and of this town Keller has constituted himself the chronicler. What quips and cranks, what tragedies and comedies, he has retailed thence for our benefit, telling them with a delicious *naïveté* of tone and manner, and in a certain distinctively Swiss fashion, of which no translation can possibly give an idea!

There are ten such stories, of which the palm belongs to an idyl called *The Romeo and Juliet of the Village*. In humbler circumstances we find reproduced the main features of Shakespeare's play—the hatred of the fathers, the loves of the children, the sad tragedy that results. Both as regards the delineation of character and the reproduction of pictures of Swiss life, the little story is inimitable. *Frau Regel Amrain and her Youngest Son* makes us acquainted with the public duties of a Swiss burgher; while in *The Lost Laugh* we are introduced into the midst of Switzerland's manufacturing activity, as well as to the religious dissensions that even now wage fierce war in her borders. The other stories are humorous; and, while remaining thoroughly national in spirit, an element

of burlesque is introduced that is exceedingly comic and exceedingly original. Keller's humour, like his invention, is all his own. In none of his works is there any imitation of a foreign model; and this originality constitutes a further attraction in a writer to whom it is needful at first to grow accustomed, but who pleases us more and more as we get to know him better and understand his tone of mind, his mode of thought, and construction of story.

Zürich Novels is the title of another cycle of local stories. Here we have unrolled before us a whole panorama of Zürich life at various historical periods, commencing with the thirteenth century. The one that deals with modern Zürich is inimitable for droll humour, caustic observation of Swiss idiosyncrasies of character, and charm of invention. *The Flag of the Seven Upright Ones* furnishes a very exact insight into the manners and customs of the Swiss, of which we know so little, though we have turned their country into our summer playground. We are here brought face to face with the new race and the old, learn what the latter have struggled for, the former attained. A series of fantastic stories, called *Sieben Legenden*, closes the list of Keller's writings. In these stories his bizarre and fantastic vein has full play. They admirably reproduce the tone of folk-tales, while they are free from the allegorical additions that

generally disfigure attempts to invent legends. Keller's talent is of a very special, interesting, and attractive nature, both original and national. Besides the pleasure derived from his individuality, much information concerning Switzerland may be gathered from his pages.

The Funeral.

About this time my grandmother fell ill ; she grew worse and worse, and after a few weeks it became evident that she would die. She had lived long enough, and was weary. As long as she was still in her senses she liked me to spend an hour or two at her bedside, and I gladly fulfilled this duty, although the sight of her suffering, and the confinement in the sick-room, were unaccustomed and dreary to me. But when the death-struggle, which lasted several days, set in, this duty became a grave and severe trial to me. I had never yet seen any one die ; and now I saw the apparently unconscious old woman lying for many days in her last agony, for the spark of life took long to extinguish. Custom demanded that at least three people should always stay in the room, who should pray in turns and do the honours to the visitors, who were constantly entering, and to give them information. Now the people, in this lovely weather, had particularly much to do ; and I, who was neglecting

nothing, and could read fluently, was therefore very welcome to them, and was detained the greater part of the day by the deathbed. Seated on a footstool, with a book on my lap, I had to read, in an audible voice, prayers, psalms, and hymns for the dying; and although my patience gained for me the women's favour, yet I might only behold the beautiful sunshine from a distance, while death was ever before my eyes.

I could no longer seek out Anna, although she was my greatest consolation in my ascetic position; but suddenly she appeared, shy and polite, on the threshold of the sick-room, to visit this very distant relation of hers. The young girl was loved and respected by the peasant-women, and was therefore welcomed now; and when, after some moments' silence, she offered to relieve me in praying, her proposal was gladly agreed to; and so she stayed beside me the remainder of the time of dying, and saw with me the struggling flame quenched. We seldom spoke to each other; only when we handed the sacred books we whispered a few words, or when we were both at liberty we rested comfortably by one another, and teased each other quietly, for youth must have its way. When death had taken place, and the women sobbed loudly, Anna also melted into tears, and could not be comforted, although the death touched her far less closely than it did me, the dead woman's

grandson, who yet remained dry-eyed. I was concerned for the poor child, who cried more and more violently, and I felt cast down and crushed. I took her into the garden, stroked her cheeks, and implored her not to cry so very much. Then her face lighted up like sunshine through rain; she dried her eyes, and suddenly looked at me with a smile.

We now could again enjoy some days' freedom, and I immediately accompanied Anna home for a change, to remain there till the funeral. I was tolerably serious the whole time, as all that had happened had affected me; and besides, I had loved and respected my grandmother, although I had only known her a short time. My friend did not feel happy about this mood of mine, and she tried a thousand devices to cheer me up, in which she resembled the other women, who all stood once more laughing and talking in front of their houses.

The husband of my dead grandmother, although he felt very much at ease, made as if he had lost very much, and had loved his wife dearly in her lifetime. He provided a pompous funeral, at which more than sixty people were to take part, and neglected nothing that was required for the correct observance of all the old customs.

On the appointed day I set out with the schoolmaster and Anna: he wore a solemn black dress-

coat, with very broad flaps, and an embroidered white tie ; Anna also wore her black church-going dress, and one of the frills peculiar to her, in which she looked like a sort of nun. She had left her straw-hat at home, and wore her hair very elaborately braided. To-day she seemed penetrated by particular piety and reverence ; she was silent, and all her movements graceful ; and this in my eyes gave her a new and endless charm. With my sadly festive mood was mingled a sweet pride to be so intimate with so rare and charming a creature ; and this pride was accompanied by sincere reverence, that made me also measure and restrain my movements, and with the truest veneration I walked beside her, and offered my services to her whenever any unevenness in the road demanded it.

We first stopped at my uncle's house. His family was already in readiness ; and when the tolling began they joined us. In the house of death I was separated from all my companions, since my position as grandson demanded my presence among the nearest mourners ; and as the youngest and most immediate descendant, I found myself in my green costume at the head of the whole mourning party, and was first exposed to the circumstantial and wearisome ceremonies. The nearest relatives were assembled in the large empty parlour, and waited for the women, who were to appear here to express their sympathy. After we

had stood for some time in silence along the walls, several old peasant-women came in, one after another, in black dresses. They all began with me, gave me their hands, made their speech, and went on in the same way to the next. These matrons were mostly bent, walked with tottering steps, and spoke their words with emotion, as old friends and acquaintances of the departed, and as doubly moved by the presence of death.

They all looked straight and significantly at me. I had to thank each of them, and also look at her, which I should in any case have done. Here and there was a tall and strong old woman among them, who walked upright, and looked calmly at me; but then some old bent woman would immediately follow, who seemed by her own sufferings to know and be able to appreciate those of the departed. Yet the women were becoming younger, and the number increased in proportion; the room was now quite filled with dark forms, who were pressing on. There were women of forty or thirty years, mobile and curious, scarcely veiling their various passions and peculiarities under the equalising mourning demeanour. The crowd seemed to have no end; for not only the whole village, but also many women out of the neighbourhood, had come, for the dead woman had been held in great esteem among them; and though this esteem had grown old, yet to-day it reappeared in full glory.

Gradually the hands grew softer and smoother—the youngest generation was coming past ; and I was already quite worn out and tired, when my cousins stepped forward, and gave me their hands encouragingly and kindly ; and immediately after them, like a heavenly messenger, the charming Anna, who, pale and excited, hastily gave me her hand, and let shining tears fall on it. Curiously, I had never thought or hoped for her, and so was all the more surprised when she flitted past me.

At length the women came to an end, and we went outside the house, where an endless troop of grave men were waiting to perform the same duty to us, when we had once more formed into a row. They were certainly much quicker about it than their wives, daughters, and sisters had been ; but they used their hard callous hands like blacksmith's tongs and vices, and I scarcely expected to draw my hand uninjured out of the fist of many a swarthy ploughman.

At length the coffin was swaying before us, the women were sobbing, and the men looked thoughtfully and uncomfortably before them ; the minister also appeared, and brought the influence of his dignity. Hardly knowing how it had all happened, I found myself in front of the long procession in the churchyard, and afterwards in the cool church, which was quite filled by the congregation. I now, with surprise and attention, heard my grandmother's

maiden name, descent, age, career, and praise proclaimed from the pulpit, and heartily joined in the chants of absolution and peace which were sung at the close. But when I heard the spades sounding before the church-door, I hastened out to look into the grave. The simple coffin was already placed in it—many people stood around and wept—the sods fell hard upon the lid and covered it. I looked in, and I seemed strange to myself, and the dead in the grave also seemed strange to me, and I found no tears. Not until it came into my mind that it was the actual mother of my father, and thought of my mother, who would also be laid thus under the earth, did my connection with this grave again become present to me with the words, ‘One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh.’

The invited portion of the assembly now returned to the house of mourning, whose rooms were enlivened by the preparations for the funeral repast. When we went to table, custom once more placed me beside the gloomy widower, where I had to remain two full hours, without being able to speak to any one, as long as the traditional meal, with all its inevitable dishes, lasted. I looked down the long table and sought the schoolmaster and his daughter, who were present ; but they must have been in the other room, for I could not find them.

At first the conversation was moderate and

serious, and the food was eaten with great solemnity. The peasants sat upright on their chairs, or leaning against the wall at a considerable distance from the table, and speared the meat with solemnly extended arms, holding their forks at the extremest distance. Thus they carried their booty to their mouths by the longest road, and drank their wine in little, moderate, but frequent draughts. The waiting-women carried the tin dishes with hands raised to the height of their face, with measured tread, swaying their hips to and fro. Where a maid set the dish down on the table, the two who sat nearest had to begin a contention, each offering her his glass to drink out of, and whispering at least two good jokes into her ear. This little fight was decided by the waitress drinking out of both glasses, and retiring more or less satisfied with the observance of this etiquette.

After two long hours had passed, the more vulgar guests gradually approached the table, placed their arms on it, and began to eat assiduously and take long draughts of wine.

The steadier ones began to talk more loudly, pushed their chairs closer together, and let the conversation gradually pass into moderate cheerfulness. This could be distinguished from ordinary merry moods, and was intended to symbolise cheerful resignation to the course of events, and the rights of life over death.

Now at last I was able to leave my place and walk about. In the next room I found Anna seated at a smaller table next her father, who, in a little group of discreet and pious men, was enacting a wise and sensible resignation to the inevitable with excellent success. Hewas paying attention to several old women, and still knew how to say to each what she used to like hearing thirty years ago. They in turn flattered little Anna, praised her manners, and called the old man happy. I seated myself among this group, and listened, next to Anna, to the old man's admirable sayings. Meantime we too, who only now began to feel cheerful, made a little meal out of the same dish, and drank a glass of wine together.

All at once a scraping and piping began over our heads. Fiddle, bass-viol, and clarionet were being tuned, and a horn sent forth its sulky sounds. While the active part of the assembly set out and climbed into the roomy loft, the schoolmaster said,

‘There is to be dancing then? I thought this custom had at last been done away with ; and I am sure this village is the only one far and near where it is still sometimes practised. I reverence the old, but not everything old is good and venerable. However, you had better go and look on, children, so that you may be able to tell of it some day ; for it is to be hoped that dancing at funerals will soon be quite done away with.’

We soon slipped out, and found the assembly in the hall and on the staircase, joining in a procession and forming couples, for no one might go up alone. I therefore took Anna's hand, and joined the line, which, led by the musicians, was soon set in motion. A wretched funeral march was played, to whose accompaniment we marched three times round the loft, which had been converted into a ballroom, and then formed into a large circle. Hereupon seven couples stepped into the middle, and performed an elaborate old dance of seven figures, complicated by springing, kneeling, and entwining, accompanied by loud clapping of hands. After this performance had lasted some time, the host appeared, walked once through the ranks, thanked the guests for their sympathy with his sorrow, and whispered here and there to a young fellow, so that all could see it, not to take the mourning too much to heart, but leave him alone and solitary in his grief, and try to enjoy life once more. Hereupon he again departed with bowed head, and descended the stairs as though he were going straight to Tartarus. But the music suddenly changed into a merry dance; the older people retired, and the young ones passed, shouting and stamping, over the trembling floor. Anna and I, still holding each other's hands, stood astonished at a window, and looked on at the demoniac confusion. In the street we saw the

other young people of the village coming towards the sounds of the violin. The girls placed themselves before the house-door, and were fetched up by the boys. When they had danced one dance they had earned the right to call out of the window to the boys who were still below. Wine was brought, and little drinking-booths erected in all sorts of corners ; and soon everything gave place to a noisy and boisterous whirl of pleasure, the noise having a more curious effect since it was a working-day, and the village around was occupied with its usual silent labour.

After we had looked on for a long time, had gone away and come back again, Anna said, blushing, that she should like to try whether she could dance in this great crowd. This suggestion pleased me very much, and in an instant we were turning in the whirls of a waltz. From this time forth we danced for several hours, without stopping and without getting tired, forgetting the world and ourselves. When the music stopped we did not stand still, but continued our way through the crowd in quick step, and began to dance again at the first sound of the music, wherever we happened to be.

But at the first stroke of the evening-bell the dance suddenly stopped in the middle of a waltz ; the couples let go each other's hands, the girls left their partner's arms, and all hastened, politely greet-

ing one another, down the stairs. Once more the party sat down to partake of coffee and cake, and then to go home quietly. Anna still stood in my arms with glowing cheeks, and I looked about me confused. She smiled, and drew me away. Her father was no longer in the house, and we went away to seek him at my uncle's. Out of doors was twilight, and the loveliest night was coming on. When we came to the churchyard the new grave lay there, solitary and silent, touched by the light of the rising golden moon. We stood before the brown mound, which still gave forth an odour of damp earth, with our arms around each other. Two moths fluttered through the bushes, and now only did Anna breathe quickly. We went about among the graves to gather a bunch of flowers for my grandmother's, and, wandering thus in the tall grass, we came among the confused shadows thrown by the luxuriant bushes on the graves. Here and there a dull-gold inscription peeped out of the dark, or a stone glittered. As we stood there in the night, Anna whispered that she wanted to say something to me, but I must not laugh at her, or tell any one about it. I asked her what ; and she said she would give me the kiss now that she had been in my debt since the other evening. I had already bent over her, and we kissed each other solemnly and awkwardly.

Clothes make Men.

About this time it happened that Melchior Böhni had some business to perform in this town ; and therefore drove thither a few days before Christmas in a light sledge, smoking his best cigar. It also happened that the Seldwylers arranged a sledging-party for the same day as the Goldachers, and to the same place ; and it was to be a costume, or masked, expedition.

So the Goldachers sledge-procession drove through the streets of the town at midday, and out at the gate, amid sound of bells, post-horns, and cracking of whips, so that the signs on the old houses looked down amazed. In the first sledge sat Strapinski with his bride, in a Polish overcoat of green velvet, laced, and edged and lined with fur. Nettchen was completely wrapped in white fur ; blue veils protected her face from the cold air and the glare of the snow. The magistrate had been prevented, by some unexpected occurrence, from accompanying them ; but the horses were his, and the sledge in which they rode, before which was a gilt woman as decoration, representing Fortuna—for the magistrate's town-house was called Fortuna.

They were followed by fifteen or sixteen other sledges, each containing a gentleman and lady, all gaily dressed and joyous ; but not one of the couples was so stately and handsome as the bridal pair. The sledges always bore the sign of the house to

which they belonged, like the prows of ships ; and the people cried out: ' Look, there comes Courage ! ' ' How beautiful Industry is ! ' ' Improvement seems to have been fresh varnished, and Economy is fresh gilt ! ' ' Ah, there are Jacob's Well and the Pool of Bethesda ! ' In the Pool of Bethesda—which, having only one horse, modestly closed the procession—Melchior Böhni was driving quietly and cheerfully. As sign of his carriage he had the picture of that Jew who had waited at this pool thirty years to be made whole.

So the fleet sailed along in the sunshine, and soon appeared on the glittering height, approaching its destination. At the same time was heard merry music from the opposite direction.

Out of a sweet-smelling wood covered with hoar-frost there burst a medley of gay colours and forms, that proved to be a sledging-procession, which stood out on the white fields against the blue sky, and was also steering in wondrous array towards the middle of this neighbourhood. They were mostly large peasants' carrying-sledges, bound two and two together to serve as basis for extraordinary representation and pictures. On the foremost sledge towered an enormous figure, representing the Goddess Fortuna, who seemed to be flying out into space. It was a gigantic straw doll covered with glittering spangles, whose gauze garments fluttered in the air. On the second carriage rode an

equally gigantic goat, looking black and gloomy, and pursuing Fortuna with bent horns. This was followed by an enormous erection, which represented a tailor's goose fifteen feet high; then came an immense pair of scissors, which was opened and shut by means of a string, and seemed to regard the sky as blue-silk material for a waistcoat. Other similar current suggestions of tailors' work followed, and at the feet of all these emblems sat, on the roomy sledges drawn by four horses, the Seldwyler company in the gayest of costumes, amid loud laughter and singing.

When both processions drove up at the same time on the square before the inn, a noisy scene resulted, and there was a great crowd of men and horses. The people of Goldach were surprised and astonished at this wonderful meeting; the Seldwylers, on the other hand, behaved for the present pleasantly and modestly. Their foremost sledge with the Fortuna bore the inscription, 'Men make clothes;' and so it was that its inmates represented tailors of all nations and ages. It was a sort of historical-ethnographical tailors' procession, which closed with the reversed inscription, 'Clothes make men.' In the last sledge bearing this inscription sat, as the work of the heathen and Christian tailors who had driven on before, venerable emperors and kings, counsellors and generals, prelates and abbesses, all in the greatest solemnity.

This tailor-assembly skilfully arranged themselves out of their confusion, and modestly stood aside to let the Goldach ladies and gentlemen, with the bridal pair at their head, go into the house, intending afterwards to occupy the lower rooms, which had been kept for them, while the others marched up the wide staircase to the large banquet-hall. The companions of the count thought this behaviour very proper, and their surprise changed into merriment and approving smiles at the inexhaustible humour of the Seldwylers. Only the count himself cherished dark sensations, although in his present preoccupation of mind he felt no especial suspicion, and had not even noticed whence the people came. Melchior Böhni, who had carefully put up his Pool of Bethesda, and remained attentively in Strapinski's neighbourhood, stated so loudly that he could not fail to hear the name of some other place, not Seldwyla, whence he said the masked procession had come.

Both parties were soon seated, each in their own story, before the spread tables, and were abandoning themselves to merry talk and jokes, in the expectation of new pleasures.

These were soon announced for the Goldachers, who went over in couples to the ballroom, where the musicians were already tuning their violins. When all were drawn up in a circle, and were about to prepare for a dance, an embassy of Seldwylers appeared, who brought the neighbourly request

and proposal that they might pay the ladies and gentlemen of Goldach a visit, and perform a dance for their amusement. This offer could not well be refused ; besides, every one expected much amusement from the merry Seldwyllers. The company therefore seated themselves in a large semicircle, according to the directions of the above-mentioned embassy, and Strapinski and Nettchen shone in the middle like princely stars.

Now the tailor-groups entered one after another. Each of them represented in dumb-show the motto, 'Men make clothes,' as well as its converse, by appearing most industriously to make some article of clothing, such as a prince's mantle, priest's robe, and then dressing some shabby person in it, who is suddenly transformed, receives the highest regard, and steps along solemnly to the sound of music. The fables were also represented in a similar manner. An enormous crow appeared, decked itself with peacock's feathers, and hopped about croaking ; a wolf, who cut out a sheepskin for himself ; and, last of all, a donkey, carrying a terrible lion's skin made of tow, with which he draped himself heroically as with a carbonaro's cloak.

All who appeared thus retired when they had completed their performance, and gradually converted the semicircle of Goldachers into a large ring of spectators, whose centre at last became empty. At this moment the music changed into a

serious, melancholy tune, and a last apparition entered the circle. All eyes rested on him. It was a tall young man in a dark cloak, with beautiful dark hair and a Polish cap ; it was no other than Count Strapinski as he wandered along the road on that November day and entered the fatal carriage.

The whole assembly looked in silent expectation at this figure, which solemnly and gravely made a few steps to the music, then seated itself in the centre of the circle, spread its cloak on the ground, seated itself on it tailor-fashion, and began to unpack a bundle. Out of it he took an unfinished count's cloak exactly like the one that Strapinski wore at that moment, and, with great haste and skill, sewed on it tassels and laces, ironed it out most correctly, testing the apparently hot goose with wet fingers. Then he rose slowly, took off his threadbare coat, and put on the fine cloak ; took a little glass, combed his hair and completed his toilette, and stood there as the actual double of the count. Suddenly the music changed into a quick merry tune ; the man wrapped up his property in the old cloak, and threw the bundle far away over the heads of the spectators, to the other end of the room, as though he wished to separate himself eternally from his past. Hereupon he marched proudly round the circle as a stately man of the world, bowing graciously here and there to the company, until he reached the bridal pair.

Suddenly he fixed his eye on the Pole with great astonishment, stood like a statue before him, while the music stopped abruptly, as though by previous arrangement, and a terrible silence fell on the assembly like a flash of lightning.

‘Ah, ah, ah, ah!’ exclaimed he, with audible voice, and stretched out his arm to the unfortunate man. ‘Why, here is my Silesian brother, the Pole! It was he who ran away from my work, because a little fluctuation in the business made him think it was all up with me. I am glad that you are getting on so well, and are celebrating such a merry carnival here. Have you work at Goldach?’

So saying he held out his hand to the spurious count, who sat there pale and smiling. He took it unwillingly, as though it had been a fiery stick; while his double exclaimed,

‘Come, friends, behold our gentle tailor’s apprentice, who looks like a Raphael, and pleased all our servant-girls so much, even the parson’s daughter, who is certainly not quite right in her mind.’

Now all the Seldwylers came and pressed round Strapinski and his old master, shaking hands kindly with the former, so that he shook and trembled on his chair. At the same time the music struck up a lively march; the Seldwylers, as soon as they had passed the bridal pair, arranged themselves for departure, and marched out of the hall singing a carefully-studied laughing chorus; while

the Goldachers, among whom Böhni had spread the explanation of the miracle with lightning speed, ran off in confusion, and got mixed up with the Seldwylers, so that a great tumult ensued.

When the noise at length ceased, the room was almost empty ; a few people stood near the walls, and whispered together with evident confusion ; two or three young ladies remained at some distance from Nettchen, hesitating whether they should approach her or not.

But the pair remained immovably seated on their chairs, like an Egyptian king or queen in stone, quite silent and alone ; the endless glowing sand of the desert could almost be felt.

Nettchen, white as marble, slowly turned her face towards her bridegroom, and gave him a strange side-glance.

Then he stood up slowly, and went away with heavy steps, his eyes fixed on the ground, while great tears dropped from them..

A. L. G. BOSBOOM-TOUSSAINT.

BORN IN ALKMAAR ; NOW LIVING AT THE HAGUE.

A. L. G. BOSBOOM-TOUSSAINT.

MRS. BOSBOOM - TOUSSAINT, who is universally acknowledged as the sun of modern Dutch novelistic literature, was born some sixty-eight years ago at Alkmaar, a little town in the province of North Holland, noted for its cheese-market. The exact date of her birth cannot be ascertained without deeply offending a lady whom all Dutch people venerate too highly to pain. It is a little weakness on the part of this writer to hold certain theories with regard to her individuality, and among these is a keeping secret matters not worth hiding. She does not like to be spoken of publicly, and although she very much likes to be praised, resents even the most friendly criticism. But as she is a prolific writer, and as she publishes under her own name, it is natural that with all the respect shown to her talents and her peculiarities by her countrymen, she should not have been able wholly to escape a certain publicity.

Mrs. Bosboom-Toussaint is the daughter of a

chemist. A great part of her youth was passed in Harlingen, and she early showed a love of literature. Her first work, written while she was still very young, was *De Graaf van Devonshire* ('The Earl of Devonshire'), an historical novel, laid in the time of Queen Elizabeth.

This was followed by another novel called *The English in Rome*. Both these works were criticised in *De Gids*, a high-class Dutch critical journal, still existing, but at that time in the heyday of its strength and vigour. The writer of the article was Backhuysen van den Brink, the well-known *littérateur*; and his essay was a critical masterpiece. He stated that Miss Toussaint had been endowed by Nature with all the requisites for historical novel-writing. She seems to have believed him; for a little time after she published *Het Huis Lauernesse*, an historical novel of great merit, which she is universally acknowledged never to have surpassed, though she has written many historical novels since, all of which contain beauties of the highest order. The book made a sensation; her native city was proud of its child, and accorded to her its honorary citizenship.

This writer is a faithful follower of Calvin; her highest ideal is a monkish self-denial and self-sacrifice, that should, however, spring from no binding vows, but from an all-outruling fear of God. A series of novels called the *Leicester Novels* illus-

trated her convictions, and placed her ideals in the brightest light. Here she treated in full of earnest theories and abstruse doctrines, and she did so in a masterly manner. Still all her power could not save her from striking upon the rock whereon this species of literature so generally suffers shipwreck—the rock of monotony.

In *Abondio II.*, a work less extensive than its predecessors, she proved herself able to portray other characters and other circumstances. *Abondio II.* is the incarnation of moral cowardice: he has not the courage to do those things which he thinks right himself, for fear of public opinion and of being called eccentric. She depicts, with marvellous talent, the many and great evils that result from such cowardice, a feeling so common among the lower classes or inferior minds. After this she returned to her old style. Her last production hitherto is *De Wonderdokter*.

Busken-Huet, before named in these pages, wrote a critical article on Mrs. Bosboom-Toussaint's novels. He pointed out all the beauties contained in her works, but at the same time did not conceal the weak points of her talent. She analyses her characters with incomparable psychological truth; her personages are living beings, and their hearts a compound of real human passions. And not only to the reader are her creations living beings. Their author takes the greatest interest in them. This,

though it produces admirable results, has also its drawbacks. Mrs. Bosboom-Toussaint from time to time makes too great demands upon her readers' attention and interest, by tedious over-minuteness in her descriptions of her characters' faintest peculiarities. Indeed, verbosity is her stumbling-block. Thus, if she has to mention a masquerade, a procession, or any ceremony of that kind, she occupies twenty pages or more with the most detailed account of every colour, every flag, every dress. She constantly sins against Lessing's cardinal law, and forgets the due demarcation between painting and writing. Her diffuseness defeats its own end; so overwhelmed are we by words, by a catalogue of details, that it requires no little imagination to construct thence a complete picture, such as she desires to conjure before our mental vision. This is further obstructed by the fact that Mrs. Bosboom-Toussaint's style, though excellent in its own way, is in itself not easy to understand, as it is somewhat affectedly brilliant and overdone with metaphors. Moreover her sentences are exceedingly long, and are written in a mixture of old and modern Dutch. She has studied industriously the masters of the seventeenth century, such as Bor, Coornhert, Hooft, and has tried to familiarise herself with their language for the sake of her historical novels, in order to write them in the Dutch of the period. She has, however, only

half succeeded, and the result is often a perplexing mixture of language.

Busken-Huet proved by a number of examples that Mrs. Bosboom-Toussaint's fancy was not very rich, and that she was apt to repeat the same ideas and characters. Her ideal, a perfect self-denial for fear of God, is to be found in all her historical novels, now in the shape of a man, now in the form of a woman, now as a young girl, now as a little boy or an aged man. These observations did not please Mrs. Bosboom-Toussaint, and incited her to prove that her fancy was richer than one of her countrymen was pleased to think. She wrote a novel called *Majoor Frans*, the scene of which is laid in a modern Dutch family. The work surprised every one; no one had deemed the author capable of writing in this style. This was followed by a second modern romance, *Langs een Omweg* ('Going Around'). But these modern subjects suffered from the same weak points as her historical works, inordinate length in descriptions and conversations; her gold is apt to be wire-drawn until it has grown almost worthless. Neither can she refrain from interweaving her stories with abstruse speculations and reflections that check and divert the reader's attention.

In those books of which the scene is laid in modern times, Mrs. Bosboom-Toussaint, with few exceptions, does not use the language and expres-

sions of three centuries ago. But, on the other hand, she has fallen into the new fault of mixing her sentences with foreign words and phrases. A foreigner reading her books, and finding every page full of italicised words, would very naturally fall into the error of thinking the Dutch language a poor one, while it is in truth very rich. But Mrs. Bosboom-Toussaint has relied upon the fact that all educated Dutch people know French, English, and German, and has therefore expressed her ideas in whichever language was most convenient for its utterance, instead of in the pure Dutch she could write if she took more pains.

The specimen of her writing which we give contains all the author's peculiarities, her merits and her faults. It has been needful to retrench the sentences, but even so they are long, and reflections have been omitted. The scene is thoroughly Dutch. In the remoter districts of Guelderland, in Limburg and elsewhere, there are many such castles inhabited by poor noble families. The scenery is Dutch, the manner of conversing, also Frances' character and her sacrifices, as well as the portrait of the general. In the country and in little towns, it is, unhappily, no rare thing for the gentlemen to be much addicted to drinking and card-playing. The description of the dinner, too, sparkles with truth. Not that it is usual to eat and drink quite so abundantly as Mrs. Bosboom-

Toussaint describes; but it is Dutch to think highly of a good dinner, and to judge people according to their way of living. In Holland there are few people who would ask a friend to come and take pot-luck. As soon as Dutch people invite even a single guest, if their means do not make it quite impossible, a dinner of many courses is provided.

To Mrs. Bosboom-Toussaint can also be applied the saying, 'Even the good Homer nods sometimes.' This has been amply proved by her latest work, a novel in dialogue called *Raymond the Cabinet-maker*. But she has given to Dutch literature so much that is excellent, that she may be allowed to fail sometimes. Mrs. Bosboom-Toussaint has been admitted a member of various Dutch learned societies.

Major Frances.

'That is Major Frances,' said the driver, turning round to me.

'Major Frances!' I repeated, half angrily, half surprised. 'Whom do you mean by that?'

'Well, the lady of the castle, so all the people of the village call her.'

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The driver begged me to alight. I walked in

front of him to find the right way ; but, alas, we were at the end of a path at the extreme edge of the wood. Opposite to us were ploughed cornfields, which were rather large, and from which we were separated by a half-dry ditch, in which heaps of dead leaves lay rotting, and all manner of marsh-plants were growing luxuriantly. There was not the least possibility of our reaching the other side from here, and even if we could, where should we be then ? On the right hand spread nothing but heath, its undulations covered with firs and pines ; on the left hand, also separated from us by dykes and ditches, lay fields sown with potatoes, whose soft light-green foliage was peeping a few inches above the ground ; behind us was the forest that we had already traversed without finding an outlet. I looked at my watch ; it was about twelve o'clock, consequently the dinner-hour of the labourers who had business in the fields. No information was to be got ; there remained nothing for it but to return the same way that we had come up to the toll-bar, and then to begin once more from the beginning. Suddenly we heard a peal of resounding laughter quite close to us, only the sound seemed to come somewhat from above. I looked up in the direction of the hilly heath. On the top of an overgrown hill stood the person who was enjoying our perplexity.

‘Major Frances!’ shouted the loud voice of my driver, making no attempt to hide his astonishment and annoyance.

It was she herself, Frances Mordaunt, who was mocking us. Really I had not anticipated such a reception.

As she stood there, some feet above me, but still pretty near, I had a good view of her; and I cannot say that this first glance reconciled me to this person who had already caused me so many disagreeable emotions.

Perhaps that was not her fault; but certainly she need not have equipped herself in such an odd way that we doubted at first sight whether a man or woman stood before us. She had gathered up her riding-habit in a way that recalled Zouave trousers, and she had, besides, put over the tight jacket of her dress a wide cloak made of some long-haired material, which was doubtless very useful this sharp cold spring-day, but which, buttoned up to the throat, was not adapted to show off the beauty of her form if she was really well-shaped. Her head was covered by a gray billycock hat with a soft downward-bent brim; the blue or green veil ladies generally attach to their masculine headgear, and which would have given her a more womanly appearance, was absent. Instead, a bunch of cock’s feathers was fastened negligently with a green ribbon, as if the person who wore the hat wished to

imitate the wild huntsman of the fairy tale. Last, but not least, she had fastened on her hat by a red-silk handkerchief tied under her chin. As far as this unattractive fancy costume made it possible to me to judge of her appearance, she seemed to be rather delicately built and slim than rough and manly—indeed, the whole person was the exact contrary of what I had dreamed. I had convinced myself that she would resemble Ristori in the character of Medea, have coal-black frizzled hair, and a face expressively lined. Of her hair I could see nothing, owing to the downward-bent brim of her hat; but, as far as I could judge by that part of her face which was not hidden by the ungraceful covering, she was fair and delicately shaped, with a fine Roman nose. Still it needed more goodwill than I possessed at that moment to be agreeably impressed by that face, screaming with laughter and tied up in an ugly red-silk toothache bandage. Her laugh sounded to my ears like a provocation, and made me yet more disinclined to give a proof of courteousness to a woman who had so evidently forgotten all feminine self-respect.

‘Listen,’ I cried,—‘listen for a moment, you who rejoice so much at your neighbour’s distress. You would do better to show us how we can pursue our road.’

‘There is no road to pursue here. He who enters this wood with any other purpose than to

have a walk or a ride, does a stupid thing : that is all I can say.'

'And you?'

'I?' she laughed again. 'I sprang with my horse across the dry ditch yonder, between the shrubs—this was my way of getting on to the heath. Imitate me if you feel inclined, though I fear that with a carriage and horse you will not succeed. But where do you intend to go?'

'I intend to go to the mansion De Werve.'

'To De Werve,' she repeated ; and now for the first time gave herself the trouble to descend the hill and approach me as nearly as she could, so that it was possible to converse with her. 'What is your business at the castle, sir?' she inquired, in quite another manner than before, no longer in the tone of a somebody speaking to a nobody.

'To pay a visit to the General van Zwenken, and Freule Mordaunt, his granddaughter.'

'The general is no longer in the habit of receiving visitors, and what you have to say to his grandchild you can address to me. I am Freule Mordaunt.'

'I do not intend to beg for any hospitality. I only wish to call at your grandfather's, and to make his and your acquaintance, for I intend to stay a while in this neighbourhood ; and I remember that I am related on the maternal side with the family van Zwenken.

‘Still worse, since at De Werve we do not specially suffer from family affection.’

‘I have heard this said before, but I am no Rozelaer. I am a van Zonshoven, Freule—Leopold van Zonshoven.’

‘And I have never heard that my grandfather lived in friendship with people of that name. But if you are no Rozelaer, your visit will do less harm ; and as a curiosity that any member of the family cares for us, you may perhaps succeed with the general. But it is quite certain that you do not come on business?’

‘I can only tell you that I shall assist you as far as possible in your endeavours to keep far from him any trouble or discomfort.’

‘That proves your good heart ; but if such are your intentions, I hesitate to see in you a member of the family, for such behaviour is totally contradictory to the family traditions.’

‘It may be ; but you may safely call me cousin, for even in our family there are exceptions, and I hope to prove one of these.’

‘If that is the truth, you will be welcome at De Werve ; but also as an exception, for as a rule we do not admit strangers.’

‘That is a great pity. I think it cannot be your wish to live in such isolation.’

‘It is just *my* wish,’ she interrupted, with a certain haughtiness. ‘My experience is already suffi-

ciently wide to make me have no desire for company.'

'So young, and already such a misanthrope—afraid of the world,' I remarked.

'I am not so very young. I have turned twenty-six ; and some of my years may safely be counted as double, just as for soldiers during war-time. You may speak to me as though I were a woman of forty. I have her experience of life. But tell me, what did you take me for at first sight—for an apparition of the wild huntsman ?'

'An apparition ! Certainly not ; that is too ethereal. I thought you a sad reality, a forester who suffered from toothache.'

She seemed piqued for a moment, her cheeks coloured, and she bit her lips.

'That is rude,' she said at last, and glanced at me with scintillating eyes.

'You wished me to be sincere, and assert you can endure it,' was my rejoinder.

'You are right ; and you will find that I have told you the truth. Stretch out your arm, cousin ; there is my hand : I think we shall become good friends.'

'That is my sincere desire, cousin ; but do not be generous by halves. Allow me really to shake your hand, and not that coarse riding-glove.'

'You are fastidious,' she said, shaking her head ; 'but I will let you have your way. Here it is.'

The next instant a fine white hand lay in mine, which I held a minute longer than was absolutely necessary. She did not seem to perceive it.

‘But call me Frances; I shall call you Leo. The endless repetition of cousin is so tiresome,’ she said cordially.

‘With the greatest pleasure;’ and I again pressed the hand that now freed itself at once.

No, truly; she was not ugly, even when she had done all she could to make herself look as displeasing as possible. It is true her features were sharp and irregular, but not at all rough or coarse. There was an expression in her face of haughtiness and firmness, that spoke loudly of conscientious strength and independent character; but these qualities were at the same time far removed from vulgarity or sensuality. It was clear that she had struggled and suffered a good deal without greatly diminishing the liveliness and cheerfulness of her spirit. The large blue eyes expressed an open-heartedness which awoke confidence. That they could glisten with indignation, or glow with enthusiasm, I had already experienced.

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‘Yes, general; I have already carried up the travelling-bag of Meneer van Zonshoven.’

‘Indeed! Have you brought a carpet-bag with you?’ asked the general, smiling.

‘Well, what shall I say to that, uncle? Was it very indiscreet of me to count on a few days’ hospitality if I were well received?’

‘Of course not—of course not, my boy!’ he exclaimed cordially. ‘As far as I am concerned, a change will be very welcome to me, only try to be good friends with Frances.’

‘Freule has ordered me to show Meneer van Zonshoven his room,’ said the faithful Frits, to apologise for following us.

‘That is just what I wished to tell you, Leo. Please excuse me for not going up with you myself.’ And he parted from me as we reached the great hall.

Frits turned to the left, went up the large oaken-wood stairs that led to the first landing of the left wing, and conducted me just into that part which had given me the impression of not being in a very habitable state. Nevertheless it was an apparently well-furnished room that Frits opened for me, in which, before all else, a large old-fashioned bedstead, with red-silk hangings, attracted my attention. For the rest, I had to grow accustomed to the darkness that reigned here before I could distinguish in what style it was papered, because, from habit, they had only half-opened one of the shutters, although there were three large windows. Frits asked me if I had any orders to give. I directed his attention to this matter, and begged him to let

me have more light. He did not stir, but stood as if he had swallowed a stick. Then he said,

‘Sir, Freule ordered that the shutters should remain shut, else the light would be too bright; for there are no blinds.’

‘O, never mind; open them all the same.’

‘Yes, but also on account of the draught; you see, as we never have guests, we have accidentally forgotten to mend them, and, in fact, there is no glazier in the village.’

I understood him, the number of window-panes was also rather large.

‘Well, then, it is all right, Frits; I shall content myself with the light of that single window.’

So speaking I dismissed the good man, whose fidelity to his master was evident by his reticence. The one shutter opened fully let in light enough, and the few broken window-panes were carefully covered with white paper, so that they could not let in much air. Now I saw that the walls were hung with tapestry, divided into squares, surrounded by gilt edges, while the wainscot and the wood-work above the door was also painted and gilt in the style of Louis XIV., but evidently executed by no master-hand; and since no care had been taken to secure it against damp and dirt, both had done the greatest possible damage; and so had the rats and mice, who had gnawed holes in the tapestry. It was the same thing with the furniture. The red-

silk damask coverings, and the fringes and trimmings of a splendid couch, which was standing in a corner, had not only lost their original colour, but were in several places so worn and torn that the horsehair showed through. Then, too, it stood on three legs; nor was there among all the high antique sculptured chairs—all equally swathed in red silk—one upon which I could have taken a seat in full confidence. On the other hand, a table with a marble top stood steadily on its three gilt bear-paws, as if it would defy you to move it; but the top itself was cracked in several places, and here and there large pieces of the mosaic ornament, that represented a star, had vanished.

In striking contrast to these splendid, but neglected, antiquities was a simple modern washstand, of gray-painted wood with light-green borders, that was certainly put, *à mon intention*, just under an oval rococo mirror; yet this had suffered too much from the influence of wet and damp to be fit for use. Fortunately I had a pocket-mirror in my bag, which served me for putting my hair and cravat in order before dinner, for I had heard that the general was very particular about appearances. Frances had warned me that a bell would be rung to announce dinner, and that I must be very punctual if I wished to avoid giving offence to the general and his aide-de-camp, the captain. I was ready in a few moments; nor did I need to inspect my room

more carefully than I had already done, in order to recognise that the symbol of all De Werve was 'decayed splendour.' I did not a little enjoy the magnificent view that was to be seen from the single window that could be opened. Looking across the moat, now nearly a marsh, that surrounded the castle, there extended a splendid Guelderland landscape. On the right, at a little distance, stood the ruins of a very old castle, that I determined to visit one of these days. It boasted a heavy square tower, which was still habitable for crows and owls, who made great use of it. The arches, which had enclosed painted windows, were still intact, light and dark-coloured ivy twined around them. It seemed to be a majestic ruin, which I should take care to keep in existence when my rights to De Werve were ascertained ; for I could not cease to look upon all these fine possessions with the eyes of a future proprietor. In a certain sense I was so already, and nothing could prevent me from taking possession of it if—Frances were only willing. The dinner-bell rang; I hurried to obey the summons. I was very curious to see how Frances would look after having dressed herself for the evening, for I expected this, owing to the demands of the general. I should also see in it a good omen for myself, after our conversation in the morning.

The general had already taken his seat, and he

pointed out to me a chair next to his at the oblong table, a piece of furniture that had certainly already seen service under the despotic government of my great-aunt Sophie, without having lost any of its solidity, and at which twenty persons could have found room, while we were only to be four. I thought of a *table d'hôte* with four guests. The captain, who was also present, took the seat opposite to me ; and Frances, who entered rather flurriedly, sat down next to him ; and there, in truth, she was in the same washed-out violet jacket that she had put on instead of her riding-dress as soon as she came home. Her beautiful hair had been put up, with more speed than grace, in a silk net that hung down heavily under this rich burden. A discoloured kerchief was fastened loosely round her neck, so as to hide its slim shape and whiteness ; even a simple clean collar was lacking, to give to this neglected toilette an appearance of freshness. I certainly could not expect that she should adorn herself in that short space like a princess in a fairy ballet ; but such utter negligence of dress seemed, in my opinion, to bode so little good, that after I had glanced at her for a minute I turned away my head with a look full of disappointment and discouragement. The naughty girl must have seen something of my disappointment ; for she smiled maliciously, and fixed her large blue eyes on me, as if she would say, ' Make yourself easy ; I

do not mind a bit what you think of me.' For the rest, she fulfilled her duties as hostess with exemplary zeal and great dexterity. She served the soup, carved the meats, and even changed our plates—for Frits seemed to consider his duty done when he had brought in the courses. The two gentlemen, and I according to their example, had to submit to this arrangement, and so she had really enough to do. But you will say that a dinner for three persons, with an unexpected guest, and in the country, in a lonely castle, among people who acknowledge themselves *qu'ils sont pris au dépourvu*, and who, above all, are living *en gêne*, could not require so much waiting; and you would be right. I had thought just the same; but at De Werve everything goes as it should not go, or at least as people would not have expected that it would.

In fact, it was no more than their usual dinner; and yet there was an abundance and a variety of food, and an evident effort after dainty dishes, that would have allowed it to pass quite well for a dinner-party. We had, besides the soup, a roasted joint and choice preserved vegetables, 'surrogate of the *primeurs*,' as the captain expressed himself; then partridges in aspic, and a dish of *poulet au riz*, with which alone we could have managed quite well; and young cabbages with baked eels, of which the captain said playfully that they had only gone into his net for my sake. As *plat doux* we had a

pudding with a wonderful sauce, in whose interest Frances was called into the kitchen ; and, further, a complete dessert.

The different kinds of wine furnished by the captain, who acted as butler with really too much liberality and variety, completed the luxuries of the table. The wines were of the best brands, and our host, as well as his aide-de-camp, took care that I did not overlook this feature. With apparent gratification he pointed out to me the quality and date of each specimen ; and although I did all I could not to appear too indifferent, and to excuse my moderation with the habits of abstinence to which I had been used since my youth, I saw plainly that my want of enthusiasm in this respect disappointed them a little.

But neither the crockery nor the table-linen was in keeping with the splendour of the courses. The first, of French china, dating from the same period as the furniture and the gold leathern tapestries, had evidently suffered a good deal from the rough hands of time and servants, and was not only cracked and riveted and incomplete, but whatever was lacking had been supplied by ordinary ware, which enhanced the splendour, but, alas, also emphasised the deficiencies of the other. The large damask table-cloth, that represented the marriage of a Spanish infanta, had certainly been in use as long as the china. It was exceedingly fine, but

worn, and had not always been mended with good results. As regards the silver, certain signs exchanged by Frances and the gentlemen, and the speed with which she sent the forks and spoons into the kitchen and ordered them back, showed me that the dozen was far from complete. On the other hand, there was an abundance of beautiful glass, to which the captain directed my attention lest I should overlook this feature, adding, however,

‘I do not attach great value to such things. Many a day in the campaign I have drunk beer out of a milk-measure, and champagne out of tea-cups ; and I did not enjoy it the less for that.’

‘Provided that the cups were not too small,’ interrupted Frances.

‘But the general,’ continued Rolf, without noticing the remark—‘the general is so fond of beautiful things that he would prefer not to drink Yquem if it were poured into a sixpenny glass ; and while our major (I mean Freule, the commander-in-chief) always manifests the greatest indifference in this respect, I have charged myself, once and for ever, with the care of the general’s wine-cellar.’

I could do nothing else than compliment him upon his zeal ; but at times there was something in his manner of giving the general his title that did not please me—a tone of sarcasm calculated to offend the old man, although he did not seem to feel the pin-prick. He was thus, in a way, reminded

of the inferiority of his means to his rank, which probably roused the jealousy of his former companion-in-arms. Any other person would have risen from his chair with indignation, or have revenged himself by a sharp repartee; but it seemed that van Zwenken lacked moral courage, or that he inclined his head to the blow from a desire for rest.

Frances felt more deeply, and was not willing to be so patient. In her vehement way she did not fail to retaliate.

‘Fie, captain!’ she interrupted. ‘You should not proclaim so loudly that you act as quartermaster here. Are you afraid lest Meneer van Zonshoven will not observe how great are your merits? But, you see, if every one in this house would follow my *régime*, and content himself with our crystal-clear spring-water, your zeal and care for the wine-cellar would be perfectly superfluous.’

I had noticed that she drank nothing but water.

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I left the captain sitting with the cognac-bottle before him. He said he needed this spirit to guard against the chill caused by eating fruit. I looked for a moment at the general, who evinced vocal proof that he was enjoying profound rest; and then walked as softly as I could towards Frances, trying to make my cigar invisible.

She raised herself from the sofa, evidently a little troubled at being taken by surprise in a disconsolate mood ; but she composed herself almost immediately.

‘You can safely continue smoking, cousin, if you wish to have a talk with me,’ she said, and at the same time she tried to smile.

‘I am not in the habit of smoking in the presence of ladies.’

‘Nonsense ! I am not so fastidious ; you know that quite well. Shall I make you some coffee ? The people yonder do not take any ; they continue smoking and drinking till—’

I interrupted her with,

‘I want nothing else but to talk confidentially with you for a quarter of an hour. Will you grant me that favour ?’

‘Certainly ; it will give me great pleasure. Take that easy-chair, and sit down opposite to me ; that is the best position for a talk.’

I did as she bade, and she continued,

‘Tell me, first of all, do you now understand why I do not like receiving company ?’

‘Perhaps. I venture to suppose that you wish to simplify the way of living, and that the gentlemen do not approve of it. Consequently you wish to avoid the expense occasioned by receiving guests.’

‘I shall never let you guess again. After my

grandfather had asked for his pension, and we took up our abode here at De Werve, it was urgently necessary to live more economically. Before then we had lived stylishly. His rank required that he, the commandant of a small fortified town, should receive all the dignitaries, as well as all his own lieutenants ; and then (let me acknowledge it) we had both got into the habit of living in abundance, and of being hospitable ; and consequently we nearly always had an open table, and there was always enough for some unexpected guests. Owing to different events, but most of all to painful family circumstances, our fortune within the last few years has shrunk so visibly that it was not possible to continue living in the same way. At that time grandpapa saw things as I did. To live less stylishly, and still remain in active service, was impossible ; but here in the country we could do just as we liked. We did not want to see company, and we severed ourselves at one stroke from all parasites ; and although it was a perilous experiment to go and live in a castle like this, with one man and one maid-servant, we resolved to do so. We further resolved to take only two or three rooms into use, as I did not mind doing a great deal of the work myself. Activity was a necessity to me. I counted on the kitchen-garden, the orchard, and the farmyard, that in those days still belonged to De Werve, to provide all our wants ; and I secretly

hoped that, living thus economically, I should be able to lay-by some money, and one day to raise this castle from its state of decay.

‘At first everything went tolerably well ; we came in the summer-time ; we both wanted rest badly ; the splendid and varied scenery enticed us to ride and drive out ; all combined to make us enjoy the solitude. But, alas, the autumn came, with its cold days and long evenings, when the general, suffering from rheumatism, could not mount his horse. Then weariness overmastered him like a plague, that I tried in vain to banish by music and reading. He was not fond of music, and he did not care for reading. He does not even like to see a book in the hands of those who surround him, except it be an illustrated book, such as are fit for a drawing-room table. When we had read the newspaper we had nothing more to say. Every evening we played some games at dominoes and *piquet à deux*. I could hardly do it any longer ; but he never found it enough. There was no one here with whom we could converse. Those who are considered the great people are rough and uncultured, and above all belong to the burgomaster’s party ; the clergyman is not a man of our sort ; and that which is called “an interesting conversation” is not to grandpapa’s taste, although he always was *par excellence* the man for social life in a large circle. Now he missed all that he was

used to, got fidgety and sad, began to languish, and was less and less satisfied with the simple way of living which I had instituted. I could hardly bear to see him so cast down without having the means of helping him. At that time one of his former comrades, who had also retired on his pension, but for the purpose of living comfortably upon his means, and enjoying life, invited grandpapa to spend some time with him. It would be a nice change, and he could thus breathe without trouble in an atmosphere more to his taste. This captain had taken a house at Arnhem, and lived splendidly, a member of the circle that gave the tone to the society of the town. Grandpapa felt quite at his ease there, and stayed the three winter months.'

'And you?'

'I stayed at home ; no question about that.'

* * * * *

The captain had already arranged the card-table, and rang for Frits to take away the tea-things. We took our seats, and the general fixed the price of the counters tolerably high, I thought.

It was as though the old man underwent a metamorphosis when he held the cards in his hands. His dull sleepy eyes glistened with intelligence and sparkled with enthusiasm. Every limb moved ; the tips of his fingers trembled, yet still they held the cards firmly, and he inspected them with an eagle eye, to calculate, with mathematical

certitude, what was lacking in ours. His pale cheeks flushed a deep red, his nostrils expanded or contracted according to the chances of the game, and the melancholy man, who usually sat with his head bowed down as though overburdened, was of a sudden seized by a spirit of audacity, of rashness, of foolhardiness, that not rarely procured him splendid successes, and reminded me of the saying, 'Good luck is with the rash man.' It is with the audacious player.

I put down my money on the table, and pitied the old man who played for the sake of money.

SANDEAU.

BORN IN AUBUSSON, FEB. 19, 1811.

SANDEAU.

APART from the fact that he is an excellent writer, a special interest attaches to Jules Sandeau from the circumstance that George Sand and he made their literary *début* conjointly—that it was under a retrenched form of his name that she wrote during her whole career. But Sandeau has other besides these adventitious claims upon attention.' He has the unique distinction of being the first novelist to whom that exclusive body, the French Academy, opened its doors. Some novelists had been admitted before his time, but they had entered upon the strength of works considered of more importance. Sandeau came in purely as a novelist. His admission in 1858 was spoken of by the president as the solemn admission into their circle of the novel—not by tolerance, but by merit; and there is no doubt that Sandeau deserved this distinction. From a literary point of view alone he is a careful and scholarly writer; his style is severe and exact; no current slang, no neologisms, deface his pages; he may be described as academical in the best sense of the term; his works are also cor-

rect in sentiment. Sandeau deals with no doubtful stories ; he does not choose for his themes the aberrations of humanity. He is an essentially moral writer, a fact that has in some quarters been urged against him as a reproach—unjustly so, if by this it is meant to imply that he is dull. Sandeau's novels hold the reader's attention from the first page to the last ; and if they do not do so by feverish and unhealthy means, this is all the more to their credit. Nor must it be supposed that the themes handled by Sandeau are of a commonplace nature. He exposes, with no shrinking hand, the errors and sins of his human brethren ; only the tone in which he does so is one of ethical indignation, in lieu of the sympathy extended to them by the latest writers of the realistic school. Indeed, almost the first work written by Sandeau proves that his novels are not food for babes. *Marianna* illustrates the terrible conflict in a woman's soul between duty and passion, a conflict under which she succumbs—a story of helpless passion and misery. It is a painful book, painted gray in gray, but thoroughly healthful. *Marianna* is not happy in her illicit love ; after having suffered, and made others suffer, she recognises her faults. It is no apotheosis of weak yielding to impulse that we read here. The author wished to prove, and proved, that under the empire of passion even the best hearts become in turns victims and torturers ; but

that, once spent, they return to their better selves, chastened by sin, to acknowledge that it is in vain to beat against the barriers of social law ; that in so doing they merely break themselves upon a wheel of their own making.

All Sandeau's novels are by no means of equal value, though all are good. In *Marianna* he had at once struck his own key, given his true measure. *Madame de Sommerville*, that had preceded it, had been good, but slight—rather full of promise than of achievement. *Fernand*, a less extended work, is also good, replete with interest, elegant writing, and careful thought. The story treats of a man who desires to rid himself of the remembrance and consequences of a youthful folly, but finds it impossible to shake himself free. He has to drain the cup he mixed for himself to the bitter dregs, and dies in the end when happiness seemed within his reach. *Madeleine* is a graceful idyl. It tells how an idle young man of the world who had eaten up his patrimony was reclaimed by his cousin Madeleine, who loved him, and for his sake pretended also to have lost her property. She teaches him to recognise the sanctity and sanity of work, and not until she has done so does she disclose to him the truth.

In *Le Docteur Herbeau* Sandeau has quitted his usual groove and written a half-humorous romance of provincial life. He exposes in it all the petti-

ness, the narrowness, the kind-heartedness, that is disguised under eccentric or unattractive envelopes, much after the manner of Mrs. Gaskell in her immortal *Cranford*. He says in its course :

‘ Have you not heard tell of certain rooms built in such a manner that each corner conceals an echo, and that the softest and most smothered sounds are repeated distinctly in all ? Little towns seem to be constructed according to this system. Nothing is said up here which is not also repeated down there ; nothing is done down there which is not immediately known up here. Yet more : begin a phrase in the southern suburb, ere you have yourself finished it, it will be ended in the northern suburb. The atmosphere that surrounds small towns must be replete with ears, eyes, and invisible tongues that fly here and there ; the tongues relate what the eyes have seen and what the ears have heard.’

A favourite theme of Sandeau’s, and one that he has handled with sympathy and force, is that which touches a burning question—the gulf that exists between the decaying aristocracy and the *bourgeoisie*. He has dealt with the opposition of money and titles in its various forms in *Sacs et Parchemins*, *Mademoiselle de la Seiglière*, and *La Maison de Penarvan*. The pride of race, the poverty that has overwhelmed the ancient nobles who remained true to their legitimate sovereign, their inability to reconcile themselves with the

current and more democratic state of society, are painted with force. But, while exposing the ridiculous side of this pride of blood, Sandeau does not ridicule it ; he shows us how deeply pathetic it is as well, and admits that this pride of race may be the most legitimate source of self-esteem, next to that which is founded upon our own merits. In *Mademoiselle de la Seiglière* we see this pride crystallised into human shape in the form of the Marquis de la Seiglière ; in the *Maison de Penarvan* it is Renée, the last descendant of an old Breton house, who clings with haughty obduracy to the traditions of her ancestors. She has sacrificed joy, happiness, almost life itself, to this pride of race. Her father and brothers had all perished in the royal cause ; she had herself incited her husband to espouse the losing side and go almost wantonly into death. Left with only a daughter, to whom she never forgave, and whom she never allowed to forget, the misfortune of her sex, she buried herself in her crumbling château, which she lacked the funds to keep in even decent repair, and lived here dead to the world, sunk only in contemplation of the past glories of her house. Beside her stern unloving mother, and an old abbé who dwelt with them, the little Paula came in contact with no living being. At last, by a *ruse*, an old school-friend of her mother's rescues her for a time from this living entombment, takes her to Bordeaux, and tries to

arrange a marriage for her. This plan fails, for Paula, instead of becoming attached to one of the various noblemen who seek her hand, falls in love with a simple *bourgeois*, a merchant. What follows is told below. The whole story is admirably narrated, and the yielding at the last of Renée's proud heart is as psychologically true as it is dramatically effective. The story has, indeed, been dramatised by Sandeau, and put upon the boards with much success; and so also has *Mademoiselle de la Seiglière*. Indeed, Sandeau has as great a reputation for his dramas as for his novels. The two seem often to go hand in hand in France, where good plays can find a ready market, an appreciative public, and an adequate histrionic representation. Together with Emile Augier, he is the author of many plays, and among others of that successful drama *Le Gendre de M. Poirier*. As a novelist, one of his chief features is his strong sense of family-life, its happiness and its duties, and his charming descriptions of calm every-day existence, while neither ignoring nor failing to comprehend the passions that often surge beneath.

The Last of an Old Family.

Two days after, Paula arrived at Bordeaux, and repaired to the Convent of the Sacred Heart. How shall we describe the abbé's emotion during this

journey? As for Paula, it was as though she obeyed the impulses of a will foreign to her own ; she had remained the whole time silent, motionless, insensible to the abbé's remonstrances and prayers. Not a word, not a sigh, not a sign of emotion ; her love was as fierce as her pride. She spent three months at the convent in the most complete retirement, and only consented to see Madame de Soleyre the evening before the day fixed for her marriage. It was no longer the time for blame ; Madame de Soleyre took her in her arms, and held her in a long embrace. This true friend knew that she had now only one task to fulfil : to act the part of mother to the child who had none, and to protect her with her own good name. Mdlle. de Penarvan's marriage was not accompanied by that air of censure which is generally called forth by marriages contracted against the wishes of parents. If the aristocracy disapproved, all the lively and brilliant society of Bordeaux were on her side, and approved of her resolution. We must state, for the honour of the official world, that on this occasion M. de Soleyre proved himself worthy of his wife ; Paula entered the Mairie on the prefect's arm. The mayor, an old friend of the Caverley family, had made a point of honour of himself joining together these two young people, and thus, by the deep respect he showed to Mdlle. de Penarvan, he removed whatever was uncom-

fortable or distressing in this young girl's situation. The abbé, who had declared very loudly that he would share in none of the ceremonies of this wedding, acted as second witness to his child, and it was he who married them next evening in a modest chapel; the poor man could not resist his little Paula's prayers. At the moment of pronouncing the blessing, he wished to make a little address, but he suddenly remembered that great house of Penarvan that he had so much loved; and it seemed to him as though he were himself consecrating its decay and eternal annihilation, and he had great difficulty in restraining his sobs. After the nuptial benediction, terrified at what he had just done, he escaped without bidding farewell, wandered about till morning in the streets of the town, and climbed sadly on to the outside of the coach, which was starting for Nantes. He had lost everything—his happiness, his pride, the joy of his life—he had nothing left him in the world; and recognising half-way up the hill the castle of Rohan-Chabot, he felt tempted to throw himself from his seat under the horses' feet.

On leaving the chapel, the newly-married couple entered a carriage, and set out for Villa Caverley. In an hour's time the horses stopped before the door of a dwelling hidden in the profoundest darkness. They alighted, and Henry, intoxicated with joy, led his young wife into a silent deserted house,

where there was not a single servant to receive them. Paula, also intoxicated with love and happiness, could hardly support herself, and walked along with her head resting on her husband's shoulder. Slowly they ascended, between two hedges of flowers, the steps of a marble staircase, lighted by alabaster lamps. After passing through several rooms, in which were displayed the riches of the four quarters of the globe—carpets from Persia and India, mirrors from Venice, masterpieces of art, valuable pictures, Grecian statues, glittering armour, family china,—after passing through a vast greenhouse, in which were displayed all the glories of tropical Nature, Caverley lifted a heavy curtain, and offered Paula a golden key.

Paula opened a cedar-wood door; she entered, and when she had gone a few steps—when she had taken in at one glance all the luxury piled about her, the cups overflowing with pearls and diamonds, the cashmeres, the velvets, the lace thrown over the furniture, when this handsome young man bent a knee before her, and said to her, ‘O my dear Paula, O my only joy, I am here in your house!’—she suddenly thought of her mother, in the sadness, the misery, the neglect, in which she had left her; she pictured her alone in her bare cold room, without even her pride remaining to her to sustain her, for this her only support had just fallen into dust. She remembered the two tears that she fancied she

had seen steal from under her eyelids ; she uttered a cry, and thunderstruck by remorse, fell fainting into the arms of Henry, who was only just in time to save her.

From this time forth there commenced for this unfortunate woman a torment hitherto unknown—the torment of love and riches : she had, as punishment, all that gives happiness here below. In attaining happiness she had fallen, crushed by the effort she had made to obtain it. Her existence was now nothing but expiation, without intermission or respite. Young, beautiful, adored, in the midst of all the goods the world envies, all her thoughts turned to her mother in the old castle she had quitted. She suffered from nostalgia after trouble and poverty. She lived in the most rigid seclusion, far from the town, far from gaiety, ashamed of her wealth, casting it from her in disgust. She had despoiled her room of all the luxury and splendour which seemed to mock the marchioness's poverty. The damp dark house in which her youth had expanded now revealed to her only its poetry ; she saw only the great virtues of the mother who had so long oppressed her ; she ceaselessly recalled the two tears that moistened her dry eyelids—the only ones she had ever seen in her eyes—and Paula felt them fall like two leaden drops on to her heart. It was in vain that Caverley, in despair, overwhelmed her with the most patient

and delicate tenderness. 'I love you,' said she, in passionate tones. 'My life dates from the day when I first saw you. I love you, and to this day I still bless the hour when first I saw you; but do not be angry with me because I am not happy. I should die if I left you, and I cannot live if my mother does not forgive me.' And when Henry tried to calm her by reminding her of all that she had suffered, 'Ah,' said she, 'I lacked patience; I did not try the right way; I did not wait long enough. I should have softened her; she would, perhaps, have ended by loving me.'

They wrote, but only the abbé replied. His despairing letters left them no hope. They never tired of writing, and never received any other answer. They travelled, they visited Greece and Italy. Everywhere Paula carried the picture of her mother growing old in neglect. Before the marvels of art and the beauties of Nature she wept over the ruins where she had suffered so much. She became a mother, and her sadness increased. When she brought a daughter into the world she had asked herself, with horror, whether this child would not grow up for her punishment. The joys of maternity had even increased her remorse, by revealing to her, in their full extent, the sacred rights, the imprescriptible rights, that mothers have over their children. This had given an opportunity for turning, with another cry, to the marchioness. The

marchioness did not answer; she opened none of the letters, and never was Paula's name permitted to be spoken before her. They spent more than a year on the shores of Lake Como. The better Paula knew Henry, the more her love for him increased—her grief grew with her love; the more reasons she had for being happy, the more wretched did she feel herself. Her happiness caused her misery. A slow fever was secretly undermining her constitution. They returned to France, sad and discouraged.

Sorrow has its selfishness, which delicate spirits avoid with as much care as the selfishness of happiness. Paula at last felt that the burden of her fault had weighed long enough on the man she loved; she determined to appear in society. The Hôtel Caverley was once more opened; she did the honours there with simplicity; all Bordeaux fêted her, and overwhelmed her with homage and respect. Paula experienced again on her husband's arm the reception she had received on the prince's. She wore neither diamonds nor jewels, and, as formerly, appeared adorned merely by her grace and beauty. And yet, in spite of her endeavours to deceive Henry and to deceive herself, in spite of the embraces of her daughter, she remained a prey to the same sadness, struggled under the restraint of the same remorse, and Henry could easily see that his dear Paula was not happy.

Madame de Soleyre also knew it; formerly Paula had only spoken to her of her mother at long intervals, and never without fear; now she spoke of her at all times; and when Madame de Soleyre, persuaded by her questions, related the adventurous youth of that beautiful Renée whom she had known so heroic and so proud, Paula, overcome by these stories, smiled at the poetic figure, whose greatness she accused herself of not having appreciated. One evening, returning from a ball, she threw herself on a sofa, and gave vent to the grief she had been stifling all through the evening. Caverley was present; he sat down beside her, and said,

‘What is the matter with you? What do you want? Speak, what can I do for you?’

‘Listen, Henry,’ said Paula. ‘I want to see my mother again. Even if she drives me away, if she curses me, if I were to die at her feet, I must see her again!’

‘But, my dear unhappy little wife,’ said Henry, ‘how could you get to her?’

‘O, I will hide myself in the park! I will wait, perhaps I shall see her pass.’

‘We will set out to-morrow,’ said Henry.

‘How good you are, and how I love you!’ exclaimed she, throwing herself into his arms.

Two days after, one evening at the end of October, they got down at a second-rate inn at

Tiffauges; they had brought with them their daughter, who had completed her third year. It was too late to send word to the abbé; as soon as they arrived they took the road to the manor. Having slipped into the park, through one of the many breaches in the surrounding wall, they stepped on in the twilight, along the leafless alleys. Henry led the child, Paula walked on in front, and showed the way.

‘She is there—she is there!’ exclaimed she, suddenly perceiving a lighted window through the darkness.

They possessed love, beauty, youth; they possessed villas, a palace, and boats which furrowed the seas; and their only dream, their only ambition, was to penetrate into that ruin exposed to all the winds, whose door was closed against them.

Another window shone on the same side of the house; it belonged to the little abode where dwelt the good Pyrmil. What was he doing at this time? Was he praying for his little Paula? Was he working at his history? When Paula was little, it was her custom to call the abbé by clapping her hands three times; she made a few steps forward, and clapped three times. Immediately the window was opened, and a tall phantom leaned over the balcony to give one eager look out into the mist.

‘Abbé, my abbé!’ said Paula, in a moaning voice.

The phantom vanished. Less than a minute after the abbé was pressing Paula to his heart, and was drawing them secretly, like three fugitives, into his room.

‘You here, my daughter ; and you, sir, you ?’

‘I am dying, abbé, I am dying! Take pity on me ; help me to see my mother ; make her pardon us ; we can no longer live like this.’

The abbé had taken the little girl ; he kept her on his knee, and she smiled at him.

‘Ah, sir, ah, my friend,’ exclaimed Caverley, ‘save her, save us !’

The abbé was silent, and looked at the child.

‘What is she doing?’ asked Paula. ‘What is passing in her heart? Does she allow you to speak to her of us? Has she spoken to you of me?’

‘For some time they continued to question, to implore, and the abbé did not answer.

‘Then it is all over, abbé, all over for ever!’ exclaimed Paula, in a paroxysm of despair; ‘and I am quite dead to her!’

The abbé had made the little one fold her hands. He said to her,

‘Do you love God, my child?’

‘O yes!’ answered she.

‘Well, then,’ said the abbé, ‘say to Him, “O God, come to me!”’

‘O God, come to me!’ repeated the child.

The abbé rose and took the child in his arms.

‘Come then,’ exclaimed he, ‘and may God inspire you!’

Surrounded, as in former times, by the portraits of her ancestors, by the light of a miserly lamp, near two firebrands smoking at the back of the hearth, sat the marchioness in her old oaken arm-chair. Her thin features, her hollow eyes, told of the inner struggles she had endured, of the silent, secret, unconfessed labour that for four years was passing within her. She was now merely the ghost of herself, but she still retained something majestic and proud: she seemed conquered, not submissive. Everything about her was gone to ruin, everything in her was suffering and moaning; but her pride stood upright, like a citadel that is attacked, undermined, assailed on all sides, which still stands firm, fights, resists, and refuses to capitulate; while below it the besieged town, destroyed by bullets, devastated by death and famine, implores for pity and mercy, and wishes but to surrender. Never yet had loneliness and *ennui* weighed on her heart with so heavy a burden as on this October evening. She was leaning on her elbow, her head resting on her hand, when the door half opened and a child glided in. Alarmed by the tall figure near the chimney-corner, the child, who had entered smiling, stopped frightened in the middle of the room.

‘Who are you?’ asked the marchioness, who did not even know that Paula was a mother.

‘I am a little girl.’

‘Come here, my child.’

The child took courage, advanced, and went to place its hands on the arm of the chair where its grandmother was seated.

‘What are you called?’ asked the marchioness, softened by this pretty face.

‘I am called Renée.’

The marchioness started, turned an ardent gaze on the child, and recognised Paula’s features. She understood ; she guessed everything.

‘Go away,’ said she, in a dull voice ; ‘go back to your mother ; return to Madame Caverley.’

Frightened by the expression and by the tones, rather than by the words, which she could not understand, the child turned to the door, and went away trembling. She walked with little steps, and the marchioness followed her with her eyes. And as the child moved away she saw her whole existence unroll itself before her ; she saw her husband, so tender, so charming, whom she had sent to death ; she saw her daughter, so beautiful, so affectionate, who would have cared for her so tenderly, for whom she wore mourning. She now recognised all the joys she had not acknowledged, all the happiness she had cast from her. The little fair head was slowly disappearing in the darkness ;

and the marchioness felt that it was life leaving her once more, which was leaving her never to return. She cast a look of distress at the portraits of her ancestors ; and she thought she saw so many minotaurs who had devoured her youth and her destiny.

Meantime the child was departing. She was near the half-open door ; and still Renée hesitated. As she passed through the doorway, the child turned round.

‘It is not true, then,’ said she, in her silvery voice, ‘that you are my other mamma?’

Pride was overcome, and the heart found vent. Renée had given a cry ; she threw herself like a lioness on her granddaughter, raised her in her arms, and, inundating her with tears, covering her with kisses :

‘Stay, stay!’ exclaimed she ; ‘stay, life ! stay, happiness !’

Less than a year after it would have been useless to seek on the banks of the Sèvre for the ruins of the old manor ; the castle of Penarvan had returned to the period of its glory. As by the touch of a magic wand, the walls, the front, the turrets, had risen again ; the escutcheons had reappeared over the gates ; the long grass no longer grew in the chief courtyard. The horses strutted in the stables, the dogs barked in the kennels, the

carriages filled the coachhouse. In the gorgeously-decorated drawing-room, the ancestors, relined and restored, appeared rejuvenated in their new frames. Everywhere, within and without, movement had taken the place of stillness ; everywhere life had displaced death. The farms which had been burnt down were built up again, the ancient domain had been restored, the factories of ropes and sails once more enlivened the banks of the river. The time of threadbare cassocks was past ; the chapel-altar had recovered its ancient glory ; the manorial seat was restored ; and on Sundays and fête-days the abbé officiated in great pomp. Everywhere joy, ease, happiness ; everywhere respect for the past joined to the activity of labour.

One hot summer afternoon the Marchioness de Penarvan, her granddaughter, and the abbé were all three assembled in that room full of portraits where we have so often seen them. In spite of the years that had past, the marchioness was still beautiful, she retained her lovely fair hair, in which shone not a single white thread. The abbé had grown somewhat stouter. On his knees sat little Renée, and he was teaching her to read out of his wonderful history. This child had become the idol of the abbé ; she was happiness for the last years of the good Pyrmil. Above all, she was the passion, the first and only passion, of the marchioness. Renée loved the little Renée with all

the tenderness she had never yet felt for any one ; she had taken possession of the child, she had brought into this love the despotism of her character.

Paula and Henry were setting out on horseback for a ride in the neighbourhood ; the marchioness went to the window, and followed them with her eyes to the end of the avenue.

‘Abbé,’ said she, making a sign to him. The abbé hastened to her side, and Renée pointed to them with a gesture that seemed to say, ‘See how beautiful and charming they are.’

‘Well,’ said the abbé half aloud, with an air that he tried to make sly and cunning, ‘it is I who married them.’

‘Ah, rogue, traitor !’ said the marchioness, pulling his ear. ‘Ah, abbé, abbé, you have never done anything else ! You have always plotted against me.’

How the good abbé laughed and chuckled and rubbed his hands !

‘Come,’ added the marchioness gaily, ‘the family will be complete to-night ; we expect Madame de Soleyre.’

The abbé had once more taken the child and recommenced his lesson.

‘Really, abbé,’ said the marchioness, ‘you have no pity ; you will bore that child.’

‘By no means ! Mdlle. Renée reveals the most excellent disposition.’

‘Come, abbé, come, that is enough ; but, by the bye, how far is this endless history ?’

‘This endless history is finished, madame,’ replied the abbé, somewhat piqued. ‘No later than yesterday I wrote the last lines of the chapter consecrated to the marquis, your husband.’

‘You are not so far as you think ; your history is not complete.’

‘Alas, madame, I know it but too well ! There still remains that unfortunate prelate.’

‘Even without the prelate, your history is not complete. There is still something wanting.’

‘Something wanting ? What is it, madame ?’

‘Well, myself, abbé ; do you not consider me anything ?’

‘I only write the history of the dead,’ said the abbé, smiling ; ‘and I reckon, madame, on never writing yours.’

‘I will dictate it to you. Take a pen. Write.’

The abbé, somewhat surprised, took a pen and placed himself ready to write.

‘As a heading,’ said the marchioness, ‘Louise Charlotte Antoinette Renée, Marchioness de Penarvan, last of the name.’

‘Last of the name !’ repeated the abbé, like an echo.

‘Next line,’ said the marchioness. ‘She lived wrapped in the glory of her family, and recognised, although somewhat late, that if it is good

to honour the dead, it is very sweet to love the living.'

'Is that all, madame?'

'That is all, my dear abbé,' answered the marchioness, drawing her grandchild towards her, and kissing her affectionately. 'However, you may add, if you like—'

'Here endeth the history of the House of Penarvan.'

THE END.

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